LOCAL INDUSTRY

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EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS

Michigan's #1, Oldest, Largest and Only Bilingual Hispanic News • Free! ¡Gratis! • Vol. 36, #46 • **September 18, 2025**

SPORTS

Page 10 – Wolverines and Lions Dominate this Weekend

Consulado de México patrocina evento de El Grito en Southwest Detroit

Por Estefania Arellano-Bermudez | Fotos por Stephanie Sanchez

El evento Grito del año pasado, organizado por el consulado mexicano, fue una deslumbrante exhibición de camiones de comida, música en vivo y actuaciones. Un día caluroso se hizo festivo en Bagley Street mientras los asistentes llenaban el aire con grandes aplausos y celebraciones de lo que el Grito de Dolores representa – el momento en que Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla tocó la campana de la iglesia en Dolores, México el 16 de septiembre de 1810, señalando un llamado a las armas que comenzó la Guerra de Independencia de México.

Este año, el Consulado de México giró. Con el miedo creciendo entre los lugareños en medio de redadas del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE), el cónsul mexicano en Detroit Roberto Nicholas Vazquez entendió que un evento privado en el Centro de Adultos Mayores de LA Sed en Southwest Detroit sería una alternativa más apropiada.

"La gente tiene que ser cautelosa en este momento", dijo Vasquez. Señaló que ha habido un gran aumento en las solicitudes de doble ciudadanía, ya que los padres mexicanos se preocupan por sus hijos nacidos en Estados

Roberto Nicholas Vazquez, the Mexican Consul in Detroit, proudly waved Mexico's flag during El Grito, as his wife, Anakarina Piña, applauded with pride. Photo credit - Alfonso Soto

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Mexican Consulate Sponsors El Grito Event in Southwest Detroit

By Estefania Arellano-Bermudez | Photos by Stephanie Sanchez

Last year's Grito event hosted by the Mexican consulate, was a dazzling display of food trucks, live music, and performances. A hot day was made festive on Bagley Street as eventgoers filled the air with loud cheers and celebration of what el Grito de Dolores represents – the moment Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla rang the church bell in Dolores, Mexico on September 16, 1810, signaling a call to arms that began the Mexican War of Independence.

This year, the Mexican Consulate pivoted. With fear growing among locals amid Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids, Mexican consul in Detroit Roberto Nicholas Vazquez understood that a private event at LA SED's Senior Center in Southwest Detroit would be a more appropriate alternative.

"People need to be cautious right now," Vasquez said. He noted that there has been a huge surge in applications for dual citizenship as Mexican parents worry for their American-born children in case of deportation. He emphasized that there are resources for those of Mexican descent who seek them. Whether through the

Continues on page 6

Detroit's Latino Community Helps Shape Smithsonian's National Museum Project

By Angela Gallegos

Detroit's Latino community made history last week as Detroit Voces and United Way for Southeastern Michigan hosted a community-led conversation with representatives from the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Latino (NMAL).

Held at the Design Build Green Hub in Southwest Detroit owned by Tanya Saldivar-Ali and her husband Luis Ali, the gathering invited residents to shape the Smithsonian's proposed Museo Móvil, a 'museum on wheels' that will showcase Latino history and culture nationwide. Rather than present a predetermined plan, Smithsonian staff came to listen, ensuring the project is grounded in the lived experiences of Detroit's Latino community.

"This is not just about history, it's about ownership," said Ozzie Rivera, Detroit cultural activist and member of the Voces collective. "For too long, our contributions have been overlooked. Having the Smithsonian here to listen is a chance to make sure our experiences are part of the national record."

For longtime community leader Angie Reyes, retired executive director of the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, the urgency is clear. "The Detroit Latino history often gets lost and is not told even to our own people," she said. "Young people may not know the history of our community, so preserving that and celebrating that is critically important now more than ever when our community is under attack."

Maria Salinas, executive director and founder of Congress of Communities, framed the session as part of a much longer struggle. "For me this is a conversation that has been happening for generations. However, the lack of equity from the city, state and federal government hasn't allowed us to move things forward," she said.

With newer generations that are more progressive and aggressive, I think we are going to move the needle to get a museum in Southwest Detroit. And with Voces, it is fast-pacing the progress so between leadership, organizations, churches, and businesses we can make this happen."

That generational perspective was echoed by Isabel Lopez, a young entrepreneur and founder of Aura Strategy. "To speak for the youth of the community, what we want for the future is to see our voices reflected not only in newspapers but also across social media, where information spreads widely," Lopez said. "We want to know the history of our neighborhood and also see ourselves in how it's being shared."

Community members also raised critical questions about safety and accountability, noting that under the current administration the Smithsonian itself has come under fire and intense scrutiny around whose histories are told. Participants emphasized the importance of ensuring that any new effort like the Museo Móvil remains secure, authentic, and resistant to political pressures to rewrite history.

Detroit Latinos gathered at The Design Green Build Tech Hub to meet with Smithsonian representatives to discuss the proposed Museo Movil. Photo credit United Way

By centering local voices, the Smithsonian and Voces signaled a shared belief: Latino history is American history and Southwest Detroit is helping to write it.

Angela Gallegos is a Special Projects Manager born and raised in Southwest Detroit. She is health-conscious in her lifestyle and committed to cultural preservation and creative storytelling. She loves connecting talented people to meaningful projects!

This article was made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.

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Lions and Tigers Hispanic Heritage Month Observances

The Detroit Lions announced that they are once again transforming Pride Plaza, their free pre-game tailgate on Brush Street, into Plaza de los Leones to recognize Latino Heritage Month during their Week 2 regular season game at Ford Field against the Chicago Bears.

The festivities ran before the game, with Interim Executive Director of the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation (DHDC) Lex Zavala serving as the event's emcee and spokesperson for Latino heritage programming. Plaza de los Leones will honor and celebrate the Latino community within Detroit through traditional dance performances, live music, artistry, interactive activities for fans, and informative discussions on the Latino culture. Special guests and activities include:

• Ballet Folklorico de Detroit: The traditional Mexican youth dance group hosted several performances in the plaza for fans to enjoy, beginning with the full team on Adams Street and followed by two small group performances on-stage.

• Salsa & Bachata Lessons: Fans in the plaza will had the opportunity to participate in 15-minute Salsa and Bachata dance lessons on stage, led by dance in-structor Mino Bachatero.

• Mariachi Mexico 2020: Detroit's very own – Mariachi Mexico 2020 – performed throughout the plaza for strolling fans to enjoy, followed by an on-stage performance.

• Live Artistry: Local Southwest Detroit Artist – Elton Monroy Duran - did a live-paint a piece inspired by his one-of-a-kind Lion sculpture – made completely out of auto parts and de-signed to represent the rich, intertwined history of the motor city and Latino community here in Detroit. The commissioned piece was auctioned off on the Detroit Lions Foundation auction site with proceeds benefitting Mexicantown Community Development Corpo-ration.

• Ford F-150® Lobo™ Display: As part of Latino Heritage, Ford will have the new F-150 Lobo displayed for fans to check out, take photos, and engage with. The new F-150 Lobo is a V8-powered street truck inspired by customer personalization trends to create a lowered, stylish and high-performance truck. The vehicle is a true fusion of cultural roots and Ameri-can performance.

• Face Painting: "Gracie the Clown" was on-site to bring the celebration of culture and art to life on fan faces.

The Detroit Tigers will be honoring Hispanic Heritage Month, with ¡Fiesta Tigres!

Friday Night Party in the Park: ¡Fiesta Tigres!, presented by Casamigos, and Hispanic Heritage Night

Sept. 19 is the beginning of the 20th annual ¡Fiesta Tigres! celebration, presented by Miller Lite, which means "Friday Night Party in the Park," presented by Casamigos, is ¡Fiesta Tigres! themed, featuring Hispanic pregame food and beverage specials on the Comerica Landing, live music and entertainment and postgame fireworks (weather permitting). The specialty cocktail for ¡Fiesta Tigres! is a Mexican Mimosa, served with Casamigos Blanco Tequila, Champagne, Orange Juice and Grenadine.

As part of being the 2025 ¡Fiesta Tigres! honoree, Aníbal Sánchez will conduct a pregame Q&A with fans in the Comerica Big Cat Court.

The Comerica Landing will feature Latin décor, Latin player cutouts and banners, special photo opportunities and pregame music from a Latin DJ. The game presentation will showcase the ¡Fiesta Tigres! theme with scoreboard graphics, lineup announcements in Spanish and special on-field programming.

The Tigers' nominee for the 2025 Roberto Clemente Award, which is presented annually to an MLB player who best embodies baseball through extraordinary character, community involvement and philanthropy on and off the field, will be announced during a pregame ceremony.

As part of the ¡Fiesta Tigres! celebration, Sept. 19 is also Hispanic Heritage Night, and fans who purchased the sold-out special ticket package receive a limited-edition "Los Tigres" jersey.

Sept. 19 is the final City Connect Friday of the 2025 season, featuring the Tigers' "Motor City" uniforms. Fans can purchase City Connect merchandise at The D Shop, presented by Meijer, and online. On Fridays, all City Connect merchandise is 30% off at The D Shop. On non-game days, free 30-minute parking for The D Shop is available in the Tiger Garage, at 128 Fisher Service Drive, from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Gates open at 5 p.m.

Vamos Tigres Rope Hat Giveaway, presented by Miller Lite, and ¡Fiesta Tigres! Finale

Vamos Tigres Rope Hat Saturday Giveaway, presented by Miller Lite, and ¡Fiesta Tigres! Finale

The final Saturday giveaway for early arriving fans at Comerica Park is a Vamos Tigres Rope Hat, presented by Miller Lite (must be at least 21 years old). To make it even more special, a small group of lucky fans will receive hats autographed by Tigers players of Hispanic heritage.

Giveaways on Saturdays: ¡Fiesta Tigres! Rope Hat

Sept. 20 is also the last day of ¡Fiesta Tigres!, which will begin with an on-field ceremony, including Hispanic dancers, flags representing the Latin American countries and recognition of all current Latin Tigers players and coaching staff.

Aníbal Sánchez will sign autographs for fans in the concourse outside Section 119 before the game, and the former pitcher will be recognized as the ¡Fiesta Tigres! honoree during the pregame ceremony.

Local Latin singer Caleb Gutierrez will throw out the ceremonial first pitch.

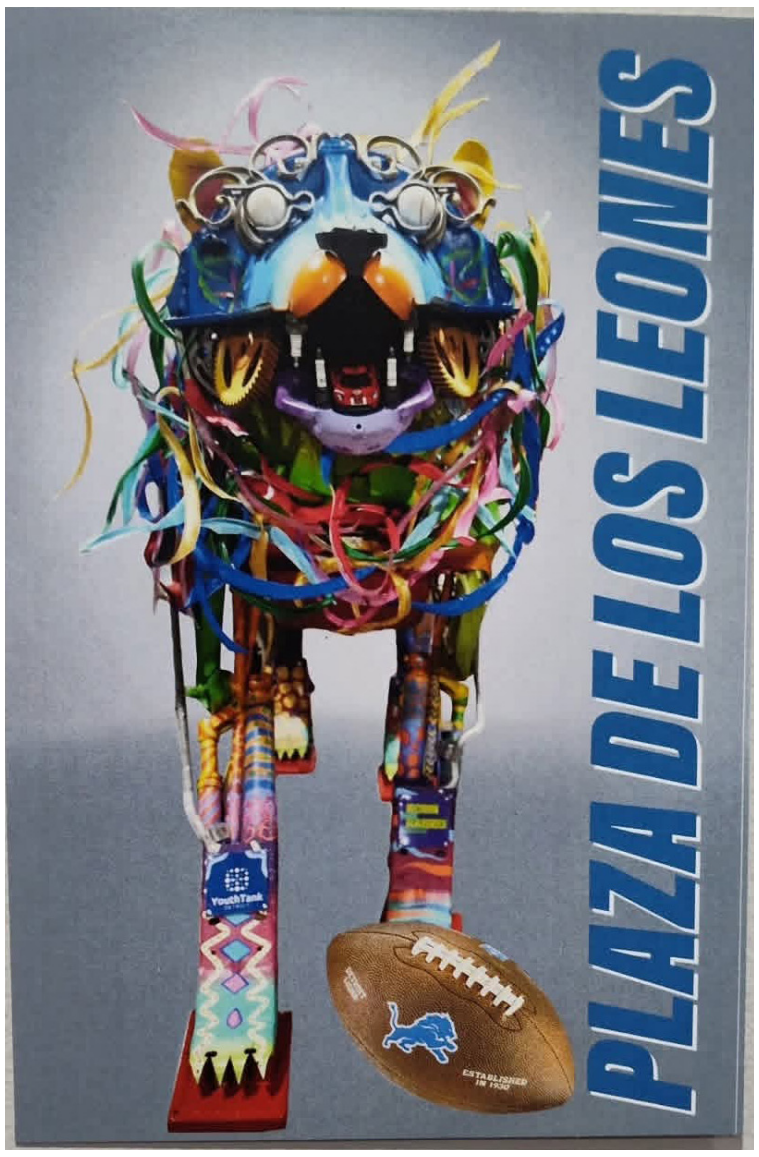
Local Hispanic artist Freddy Diaz, who is the final featured artist in the 2025 Tigers Design Series, will create a live mural design depicting ¡Fiesta Tigres! on the Comerica Park concourse outside Section 134 throughout the game. Digitized copies of the mural design will be printed and given to 200 lucky fans at random. Diaz is also collaborating with the Tigers to offer $59 limited-edition ¡Fiesta Tigres! T-shirts in The D Shop, presented by Meijer.

Fans can also bid on a hand-decorated Javy Baez jersey designed by Diaz, with auction proceeds supporting the Detroit Tigers Foundation.

Gates open at 11:30 a.m.

Ballet Folklorico de Detroit dance group with Detroit Lions mascot Roary, before the Lions vs. Bears game this past Sunday

Vanessa Galaviz of Ballet Folklorico de Detroit entertains fans before the Lions vs. Bears game, this past Saunday



The Plaza de los Leones event before the Detroit Lions vs Chicago Bears game last Sunday highlighted various expressions of Latino Heritage and featured the latest lion sculpture made out of auto parts by Elton Monroy Duran called Courage in Motion. Photo from Facebook.

Dancers from Ballet Folklorico de Detroit entertain fans before the Lions vs. Bears game, this past Saunday

Javier González Weaves Freedom and Family Legacy Into Sculptural Tapestries

By Amber Ogden | Photo credit - Tafari Stevenson-Howard

It's a late Saturday afternoon in Detroit's Palmer Woods. The reflection of the pool bounces off the framed art and sculptural pieces scattered throughout a private collector's yard for an exclusive art exhibition. Guests gather around the pool, glasses of wine in hand, as artist Javier González is in conversation with Katie A. Pfohl, associate curator of Contemporary Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts, as he talks about his process of color, texture, and movement that seems to vibrate against the wall.

"I'm overwhelmed by all the love that people have shown me today," González says, smiling as he looks around the room. "I really feel loved, and people like the artwork too. One thing I really like is that people tell me my artwork is different, because that's my goal ,not to do what everyone else is doing, but to do my own thing."

Born in Bogotá, Colombia, González grew up surrounded by craftsmanship, the handiwork of his grandmothers, who sewed and quilted, and the artisanship that runs through his family history. After moving to Detroit, he found himself inspired by the city's raw industrial energy and the depth of African American culture here. He began experimenting with a process he calls "piping," a technique inspired by cake decorating. Using bags filled with paint, he creates raised looms on his canvases and weaves in beads, threads, and found objects to produce high-relief surfaces that practically leap from the wall.

This inventive process, which he honed over years of trial and error, gave González the depth he was seeking, literally and emotionally. By transforming paint into a three-dimensional, textile-like material, he found a way to bring his stories of ancestry, survival, and resistance into the physical world.

"When I came to Detroit, it was intentional," he recalls. "I didn't know it was going to be like this, I didn't know I was going to find so much love, so much support. At that point, I didn't even know I wanted to be an artist." González laughs, remembering how an ex-partner encouraged him to start making art.

"I was always creative , decorating homes, making things for friends . and people would say, 'Aren't you an artist?' It wasn't until years later that I started really seeing it as a career."

That career has now taken a leap forward thanks to this very show, which González describes as a turning point. He credits a longtime supporter and private collector, Dr. Lorna Thomas, for helping him refine his presentation and reach a wider audience.

"At that point, I felt like my issue was that I was not looking good on paper," González admits. "I've always trusted my work. I've always thought it was high quality. But I just didn't have the extra polish. She looked at me and said, 'You're my project.' And when she said, 'We're going to do a show here,' I was ready. I already knew what I wanted to do."

The result is a body of work that pushed him artistically and personally. "It wasn't just creating the pieces," he says. "The pieces really helped me do a lot of inner work on myself but also a lot of organizing, emailing, running errands, working with my team. This show took everything I had."

The complexity is evident in the work itself, which bursts with color, high relief, and painstaking detail.

"I think that piece (Infinitely Grateful) is the most complex I've made so far," González says of one of the centerpieces. "It was a lot of work, but I love the colors, I love the texture, I love all the details."

For González, this exhibition has also been a moment of transformation. "To be completely honest, now that I look good on paper, the sky is the limit," he says with a grin.

"This show has given me confidence and trust ,trust in myself, and trust that everything is going to work out. Because it always does."

Amber Ogden is a freelance writer born and raised in Detroit. She has published work in Forbes, EATER Detroit, Visit Detroit, and the Michigan Chronicle. She enjoys art and loves to find new (and old) cool things in the city in her free time.

This article was made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.

Javier Andres Gonzalez in his studio.

Javier Andres Gonzalez proudly standing next to his work.

Javier Andres Gonzalez and Katie A. Pfohl during artist talk

Javier Andres Gonzalez.

Showcase of a variety of pieces.

Grand Opening Celebration: Friday, September 26

Postal Total Expands Shipping and Business Services in Southwest Detroit

Photo credit: Melissa Douglas

Located just five minutes from Michigan Central Station, a former ice cream shop at the corner of Vernor and Ferdinand has been transformed into Postal Total, a bilingual all-in-one pack-and-ship center serving Southwest Detroit and Windsor, Canada.

Anita Colon inside the shop

Postal Total opened in late July and currently offers USPS, FedEx, UPS, and DHL shipping services under one roof, including Amazon returns and international options. The store also provides mailbox rentals, printing, walk-in notary, passport photos, and will soon add U-Haul truck rentals to its lineup.

To mark its launch, Postal Total will host a Grand Opening Celebration on Friday, September 26, from 4–7 p.m. featuring giveaways, free passport photos, face painting for kids, local food vendors, and a social media contest with a $100 La Jalisciense gift card as the grand prize. The event will also support local nonprofits The Wave Project and Motor City Music Club with a donation drive for snacks and winter gear.

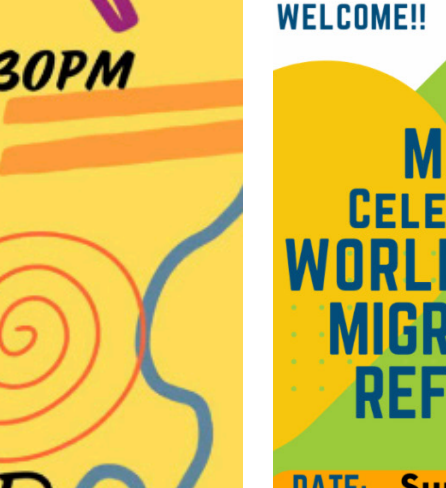
Bridging a Gap in Southwest Detroit

"All-in-one shipping centers are common in the suburbs but rare in Detroit's neighborhoods," said Lindsay Hamby, co-owner of Postal Total. "Southwest is one of the most densely populated areas of the city with strong international ties, yet it lacked a one-stop bilingual shipping option with all four major carriers - USPS, FedEx, UPS, and DHL - under one roof. We wanted to change that."

Her husband and co-owner Myles Hamby added, "Southwest and Corktown are full of entrepreneurs working from home. Our mailboxes are affordable, professional, and secure, helping people protect their privacy while growing their businesses. We also serve residents in Windsor, Canada looking for a Detroit mailing address."

For the Hambys, Postal Total is more than a business. Myles, whose grandparents immigrated from Argentina and Iran, says his international family ties make him excited to open in a neighborhood with such global connections. "We know how important it is for people to stay connected with loved ones across borders," he said. "Postal Total lets us provide that service while honoring the international spirit of this community."

To carry that vision forward, they hired Anita Colón, a longtime Southwest resident and community leader, as the Store Operator. Anita not only provides trusted bilingual service, but many times she already knows the person walking through the door.



A look inside.

As part of its community commitment, Postal Total also offers 50% off printing services for students every Thursday, helping young people access resources for school and projects.

Postal Total Grand Opening

4801 W Vernor Hwy, Detroit, MI 48209
Friday, September 26, 2025, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Free passport photos, giveaways, kids' activities, food vendors, and more.

Community support: Donations of snacks and adult-size hats, gloves, socks, hand-warmers, and blankets encouraged

The Hamby family.

About Postal Total

Postal Total is a bilingual, family-owned pack-and-ship center in Southwest Detroit offering USPS, FedEx, UPS, and DHL services, alongside mailbox rentals, printing, notary, passport photos, and will soon add U-Haul truck rentals to its lineup. By combining big-brand services with neighborhood accessibility, Postal Total is helping residents and entrepreneurs from Detroit and Windsor, Canada connect locally and globally.

POSTAL TOTAL

Strangers No Longer
ALL ARE WELCOME!!
MASS
CELEBRATING
WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS & REFUGEES
DATE: Sunday, October 5th
PLACE: Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament
9844 Woodward Ave. Detroit
TIME: 1:45 - 4:00 PM
1:45 - Pilgrimage Walk Outside
2:30 - Mass presided by Archbishop Weisenburger
3:30 - Final Blessing & Testimonies
4:00 - Food Tables
BRING YOUR PARISH ORGANIZATION'S BANNER!!
Migrants, missionaries of hope
REGISTER HERE
More Info at: 313-549-0421 or
sakmar.g@strangersnolonger.org

Cultura y Comunidad / Culture and Community

Tu voz, tu barrio, tu espacio | Your voice, your neighborhood, your space

Sound Check

Music from the local and global stage

OUR LOCAL PICK

Track — 3 AM ON VERNOR
Arist — Gabriel Duran
Instagram — @gabrielxduran

Chopped vocals and Detroit electro drums. It's a streetcorner serenade that thumps like a techno track. Plus, Isaiah Johns' (@isayhah) music video is a soulful, frenetic masterpiece.

Voces picadas y beats de electro de Detroit: una serenata de esquina que pega como un track de techno. Y el video de Isaiah Johns es una joya frenética y llena de alma.

OUR GLOBAL PICK

Track — ALAMBRE PúA
Arist — Bad Bunny
Instagram — @badbunnypr

ALAMBRE PúA runs on soft conga tones, a whispering shaker, and an airy, melancholic synth line—heartbreak you can still dance to.

ALAMBRE PúA se mueve con congas suaves, un shaker que susurra y un synth melancólico y ligero—pura tusa pero igual bailable.

Submitted by EL CENTRAL Staff!

SW Sazón

One dish, one spot, puro sabor

Roasted poblano pepper stuffed with picadillo (seasoned ground beef, apples, nuts, and apricots), smothered in a creamy white walnut sauce, and topped with bright pomegranate. The colors red, white, and green mirror the Mexican flag, making it one of the most patriotic plates you'll ever eat. Available all September, only in Detroit.

Chile poblano asado, relleno de picadillo con carne molida, manzana, nueces y chabacano. Se cubre con una salsa cremosa de nuez y se adorna con granada roja. Los colores verde, blanco y rojo reflejan la bandera de México, por eso es uno de los platillos más patrióticos que existen. Disponible todo septiembre, solo en Detroit.

Got a favorite dish, drink, or hidden gem in Southwest Detroit? Put us on! We're spotlighting local flavors, from tacos and tamales to cafes and bakeries. Scan the QR code at the bottom of the page to submit your recommendation.

Dish — Chile en Nogada
Restaurant — La Jalisciense
Price — $18

Chile en Nogada, prepared by Chef Pichón (credit: @lajalisciensedetroit on IG)

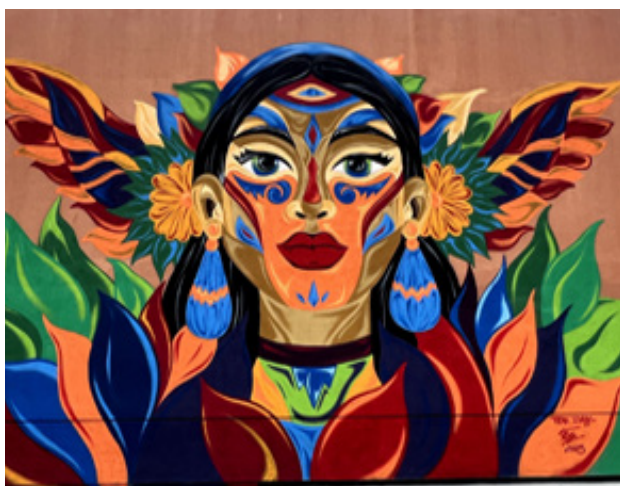
Hecho en Detroit

Art built by the city that builds

Artist Trae Isaac (pictured below) painted this mural on the Roberto Clemente Center in the Bagley Arts Alley, which opened on June 28, beside two other murals.

Trae Isaac on IG @traeisaac

El artista Trae Isaac (en la foto de abajo) pintó este mural en el Centro Roberto Clemente, dentro del Bagley Arts Alley, que se inauguró el 28 de junio junto a otros dos murales.



Isaac worked for three days straight to finish this piece, using spray paint techniques he's been perfecting for years. "I create for the community, and I create about the community," he said.

Mural — Women of the Ojibwe
Arist — Trae Isaac
Instagram — @Traeisaac
Location — 2361 Bagley St.

Throwback Thursday

Snapshots of our roots

Fiestas Guadalupanas Once Filled Bagley Street

Fiestas Guadalupanas brought Bagley Street to a standstill. Families braved the cold to honor the Virgen and turned Southwest into a living devotion.

Las Fiestas Guadalupanas paralizaron la Bagley. Las familias aguantaron el frío para honrar a la Virgen y convirtieron el Southwest en pura devoción viva.

Credit: Source: Tradiciones del Pueblo (Casa de Unidad, 1990), edited by Margarita Valdez. Detroit (Detroit, MI: Casa de Unidad, 1990)

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Consulado de México patrocina evento de El Grito en Southwest Detroit

Con't de pg. 1

Fotos por Stephanie Sanchez y Alfonso Soto

Unidos en caso de deportación. Enfatizó que hay recursos para aquellos de ascendencia mexicana que los buscan. Ya sea a través del sitio web del consulado o las páginas oficiales de las redes sociales del consulado, hay recursos y números de contacto disponibles para aquellos que necesitan servicios.

Jane Garcia sonríe mientras asiste al evento

Jane Garcia, presidenta de la Junta de Latinoamericanos por el Desarrollo Social y Económico (LA SED), estuvo presente en el evento privado el viernes por la noche. Garcia es una gran defensora de Southwest Detroit y ha estado defendiendo el área al consulado. Cuando se propuso el evento privado de Grito, inmediatamente ofreció el espacio en el Centro de Mayores de LA SED en W. Vernor y Green St.

"Creo que están comprometidos. Ellos entienden los problemas y quieren estar realmente involucrados", dijo Garcia del Consulado de México en Detroit.

Mientras que el consulado ha visto un aumento en las solicitudes de doble ciudadanía, García dice que LA SED ha estado haciendo negocios como de costumbre con abogados disponibles para asegurarse de que las personas no pierdan sus casas o propiedades en caso de deportación.

"Tenemos un abogado para asegurarnos de que hay un camino para asegurarnos de que puedan conservar su propiedad incluso si tienen que irse", dijo Garcia.

El evento del Grito fue atendido por Sheila's Bakery, sirvió 1800 Tequila y con vendedores que vendían juguetes y joyas mexicanas. La artista visual Fatima Melendez McGrew, que nació en Texas y se crió en Chihuahua, México, pintó en vivo el horizonte de Detroit con manos de varios tonos de piel sosteniendo flores. Se alentó a los invitados a colocar marcas de ubicación en un mapa de madera de México para mostrar dónde habían estado, dónde habían nacido y dónde querían visitar.

Antes de que llegara el momento para el Grito, el Cónsul General Vazquez entregó el premio Otli de este año a Debra Maria Rivera Ehrmann por su trabajo impactante para los latinos en Michigan. Otli es una palabra Nahuatl que significa camino. Cada año el Cónsul entrega el premio a una persona que ha logrado grandes cosas y ha ayudado a impulsar a la comunidad mexicana hacia adelante. Ehrmann es actualmente vicepresidente de desarrollo comunitario en el Centro Multicultural La Familia, Inc., que se encuentra en Pontiac.

El patrocinador principal del evento fue The Ideal Group, cuyas contribuciones se extienden más allá del patrocinio, elevan los programas y oportunidades de la comunidad.

Cónsul Vazquez presents the Otli award to Debra Maria Rivera Ehrmann

La Fundadora de Numu Toys, Teresa Cedrún, y esposo Alfonso Vela

Jesse Venegas, presidente de Ideal Group, dice que cree en el "triple balance": Economía, bienestar social y mejora ambiental.

"No se puede medir simplemente en una declaración de ingresos. Tienes que ser medido en cómo cuidas de tu vecindario", dijo Venegas. Venegas, cuya familia ha estado en los Estados Unidos por más de cien años, todavía considera a su familia la comunidad inmigrante. De las comunidades de expatriados e inmigrantes, señaló que es importante unirse para ser una fuerza más viable. "Todos deberíamos estar trabajando juntos", agregó Venegas.

En el espíritu de unidad, el Cónsul General Vazquez se apresuró a recordar a los 200 asistentes al evento: "La historia de Mexicantown Detroit no ha terminado. Todavía está en proceso".

Estefanía Arellano-Bermúdez es una escritora independiente latina que reside en el área metropolitana de Detroit. Colabora regularmente con EL CENTRAL Hispanic News y es miembro del Laboratorio de Reportajes Vecinales de Planet Detroit.

Este artículo y sus fotos fueron posibles gracias a una generosa donación a EL CENTRAL Hispanic News por parte de Press Forward, el movimiento nacional que fortalece a las comunidades revitalizando las noticias locales. Más información en www.pressforward.news .

Mexican Consulate Sponsors El Grito Event in Southwest Detroit

Continued from page 1

Jesse Venegas pictured beside wife Yesenia Lara-Venegas

consulate website or official consulate social media pages, there are resources and contact numbers available to those in need of services.

Jane Garcia, chairwoman of the Board for Latin Americans for Social and Economic Development (LA SED), was in attendance at the private event on Friday evening. Garcia is a big advocate for Southwest Detroit and has been championing the area to the consulate. When the private Grito event was proposed, she immediately offered the space at the LA SED Senior Center on W. Vernor and Green St.

"I think that they're engaged. They understand the problems, and they want to really be involved," said Garcia of the Mexican Consulate in Detroit.

While the consulate has seen an uptick in dual citizenship requests, Garcia says that LA SED has been business as usual with attorneys on hand to make sure people don't lose their homes or property in case of deportation.

"We have a lawyer to make sure that there is a path to making sure that they're able to keep their property even if they have to leave," said Garcia.

The Grito event was catered by Sheila's Bakery, served 1800 Tequila, and featured vendors selling Mexican toys and jewelry. Visual artist Fatima Melendez McGrew, who was born in Texas and raised in Chihuahua, Mexico, live painted the Detroit skyline prominently featuring hands of various skin tones holding flowers. Guests were encouraged to place location marks on a wooden map of Mexico to show where they'd been, where they were born, and where they wanted to visit.

Fatima Melendez McGrew live painting Detroit Skyline

Before it came time for the Grito, Consul General Vazquez presented this year's Otli award to Debra Maria Rivera Ehrmann for her impactful work for Latinos in Michigan. Otli is a Nahuatl word meaning path. Every year the Consul presents the award to an individual who has accomplished great things and has helped propel the Mexican community forward. Ehrmann is currently the vice president of community development at Centro Multicultural La Familia, Inc., which is located in Pontiac.

The main sponsor of the event was The Ideal Group, whose contributions extend beyond sponsorship, they uplift community programs and opportunities. Jesse Venegas, president of Ideal Group, says he believes in the "triple bottom line" – economics, social wellbeing, and environmental improvement.

"You can't just be measured on an income statement. You've got to be measured on how you take care of your neighborhood," Venegas said. Venegas, whose family has been in the United States for over a hundred years, still considers his family the immigrant community. Of the expat and immigrant communities, he noted that it's important to unite to be a more viable force. "We should all be working together," Venegas added.

In the spirit of unity, Consul General Vazquez was quick to remind the 200 event goers, "The story of Mexicantown Detroit is not over. It's still in the making."

Estefania Arellano-Bermudez is a Latina freelance writer living in metro Detroit. She is a regular contributor to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News and a member of Planet Detroit's Neighborhood Reporting Lab.

EL CENTRAL Hispanic News is partially funded by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news

Attendees are greeted with food and beverages

Artesania Elenita Linda

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Bagley-West Vernor Historic District Receives Unanimous Approval, Next Up for State Vote

Story and photos by Michael D. Gutierrez

If you own a business along Bagley or West Vernor, last Thursday night's meeting at the Mexicantown CDC was the news you've been waiting three years to hear. Detroit's Historic Designation Advisory Board voted unanimously – 9 to 0 – to nominate the Bagley-West Vernor commercial corridors for the National Register of Historic Places.

What does that mean for you if you own property with the new designation? If the state approves it on September 22 and the feds sign off after that, you could get up to 45% of your renovation costs back through tax credits – actual credits that reduce what you owe the government.

"This was a labor of love," said HDAB Director Janese Chapman after the vote. "When you meet a community that says, 'This place matters – no matter what anybody else says – this place matters to us,' that's what tugs at my heart."

Suzy Garza-Villareal from Tamaleria Nuevo Leon asked what every business owner was thinking: "Who is there to guide us step by step? I need someone to sit down and say, 'Press A, press B…'" At 65, she's working 12-hour days in a building that needs major repairs. "People think I'm rolling in dough, but man… I'm not a big business," she said.

HDAB Deputy Director Lisa DiChiera was already making moves before people left the building. Paula Anderanin, who owns Candela Detroit in the old Lithuanian Hall, walked out with DiChiera's business card and a direct connection to the state architect who runs the tax credit program in Lansing.

"I already connected two people tonight to the architect who runs the program so they can start right away," DiChiera said. The board plans educational workshops once federal approval comes through.

DiChiera calls the National Register designation "landmark light" – all the recognition, none of the red tape if you don't want the credits. Federal historic tax credits cover 20% of qualified renovation costs, with no cap. Michigan adds another 25%, though that money is competitive. For business owners without cash up front, specialized companies can provide renovation funding in exchange for the credits.

The proposed district includes 207 parcels along both sides of Bagley and West Vernor between 16th and Ferdinand Streets, split by I-75 into two sections. Of the 116 buildings, 66 are "contributing" (commercial structures from the 1880s-1960s that reflect Southwest's historic significance).

The Bagley-West Vernor includes businesses that have anchored our community for generations—Mexican Village Restaurant (Detroit's oldest Mexican restaurant, opened in the late 1940s), Honey Bee Market (operating since 1956), and others that served as gathering spaces during urban renewal and I-75 construction that tried to destroy the neighborhood.

Following the September 22 state review, the nomination heads to the National Park Service by October. Federal review takes 3-5 months.

For business owners like Garza-Villareal, who commissioned a "Welcome to Mexicantown" mural on her building because she was fed up with people not knowing whether they were in Mexicantown or Corktown, the approval gives our Latino commercial corridor a level of national recognition that's unprecedented.

"I got tired of waiting," she said. "I fight for this area. Not just my business—I want the neighborhood recognized. Everybody recognized."

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Michael D. Gutierrez is the Digital Content Manager for EL CENTRAL Hispanic News. He is a screenwriter and filmmaker with a decade of experience in the television and film industry, contributing to projects including THE HOLDOVERS and LETHAL WEAPON on Fox. He is an active member of the Writers Guild of America-West and its Latino Writers Committee.

This article and photos were made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.

El Distrito Histórico Bagley-West Vernor recibe aprobación unánime Y pasa a voto estatal

Por Michael D. Gutierrez

Si tienes un negocio en Bagley o West Vernor, la reunión del jueves en el Mexicantown CDC trajo la noticia que llevabas tres años esperando. La Historic Designation Advisory Board (Junta Asesora de Designaciones Históricas de Detroit, HDAB) votó de forma unánime – 9 a 0 – para nominar los corredores comerciales de Bagley-West Vernor al Registro Nacional de Lugares Históricos.

¿Qué significa esto para ti? Si el estado lo aprueba el 22 de septiembre, y después el gobierno federal da el visto bueno, podrías recuperar hasta 45% de los costos de renovación en créditos fiscales – créditos que reducen lo que le debes al gobierno.

"Esto fue un trabajo hecho con amor", dijo la directora de HDAB, Janese Chapman, después del voto. "Cuando una comunidad dice: 'Este lugar importa—no importa lo que otros digan—este lugar importa para nosotros', eso es lo que me toca el corazón."

La dueña de Tamalería Nuevo León, Suzy Garza-Villarreal, dijo lo que muchos comerciantes pensaban: "¿Quién nos va a guiar paso a paso? Necesito que alguien se siente conmigo y me diga: 'Aprieta A, aprieta B…'". A sus 65 años trabaja turnos de 12 horas en un edificio que necesita reparaciones grandes. "La gente piensa que estoy nadando en dinero, pero la verdad… no soy un negocio grande", comentó.

La subdirectora de HDAB, Lisa DiChiera, empezó a mover fichas antes de que la gente saliera del edificio. Paula Anderanin, dueña de Candela Detroit (en el antiguo Lithuanian Hall), se fue con su tarjeta de presentación y un contacto directo con el arquitecto estatal que maneja el programa de créditos fiscales en Lansing.

"Ya conecté a dos personas esta noche con el arquitecto que lleva el programa para que puedan empezar de inmediato", explicó DiChiera. Una vez que llegue la aprobación federal, la junta planea ofrecer talleres educativos.

DiChiera describe la designación del Registro Nacional como "versión ligera de monumento histórico": todo el reconocimiento, pero sin burocracia si no quieres usar los créditos. Los créditos federales cubren 20% de los costos de renovación calificados, sin límite. El estado de Michigan agrega otro 25%, aunque ese dinero es competitivo. Para los que no tienen capital al inicio, hay compañías que adelantan fondos a cambio de quedarse con los créditos.

El distrito propuesto abarca 207 propiedades a lo largo de Bagley y West Vernor entre las calles 16 y Ferdinand, dividido en dos secciones por la I-75. De los 116 edificios, 66 son considerados "contribuyentes" (construcciones comerciales de los años 1880 a 1960 que muestran la importancia histórica del suroeste).

En Bagley-West Vernor están negocios que han sido pilares de nuestra comunidad por generaciones: Mexican Village Restaurant (el restaurante mexicano más antiguo de Detroit, abierto a finales de los 40), Honey Bee Market (operando desde 1956), y otros que fueron espacios de reunión durante la renovación urbana y la construcción de la I-75, que intentó borrar el vecindario.

Después de la revisión estatal del 22 de septiembre, la nominación pasará al National Park Service (Servicio de Parques Nacionales) en octubre. El proceso federal tarda entre 3 y 5 meses.

Para Garza-Villarreal, quien mandó pintar un mural de "Welcome to Mexicantown" en su edificio porque estaba cansada de que la gente no supiera si estaba en Mexicantown o Corktown, esta aprobación da al corredor comercial latino un nivel de reconocimiento nacional nunca visto.

"Me cansé de esperar", dijo. "Yo peleo por esta área. No solo por mi negocio—quiero que el vecindario sea reconocido. Que todos seamos reconocidos."

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Michael D. Gutiérrez es el Gerente de Contenido Digital de EL CENTRAL Hispanic News. Es guionista y cineasta con una década de experiencia en la industria televisiva y cinematográfica, contribuyendo a proyectos como THE HOLDOVERS y LETHAL WEAPON en Fox. Es miembro activo del Sindicato de Escritores de América-Oeste y de su Comité de Escritores Latinos.

Este artículo y sus fotos fueron posibles gracias a una generosa donación a EL CENTRAL Hispanic News por parte de Press Forward, el movimiento nacional que fortalece a las comunidades revitalizando las noticias locales. Para más información, visite www.pressforward.news.

HDAB Deputy Director Lisa DiChiera presents an update on the historic designation to stakeholders gathered at the Mexicantown CDC

Tamaleria Nuevo Leon owner Suzy Garza-Villareal makes a point about the designation to HDBA Director Janese Chapman, center, as Advisory Board member Ozzie Rivera, left, and other HDBA members look on

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EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS

Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide

A Century of Auto History in a Neighborhood that Built the Car

Exploring Our Auto Legacy -

Introducing the Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide

Editor's Note:
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News is pleased to introduce the Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage *Guide* to our readers and online followers. Santiago Esparza's "Hank Aguirre's Mexican Industries" article celebrates someone who left his stamp on area industry and our community in myriad ways. It is only fitting that this and a 2024 *EL CENTRAL* article about the Detroit area Lowriders by Andrea Meza are two of the three essays posted to the *Guide* that introduce our community's "auto roots."

With the support of funding from Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news, *EL CENTRAL* anticipates publishing four additional articles over the course of the next year that that will explore how the Southwest Detroit Hispanic community has contributed to the growth and global impact of the automotive industry.

Current plans envision a two-part series that traces the first wave of Mexican migration to Detroit after World War I, as well as the hardships of the *Los Repatriados* who were forced back to Mexico during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Hispanic Manufacturing Center will be the subject of another profile. While this pioneering effort of neighborhood entrepreneurs did not last in that form, it helped pave the way for the success of The Ideal Group, which will be the focus of the fourth article. These articles will be developed along with members of the Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage *Guide* team. Anyone who would like to volunteer aid the research effort associated with any article should email: volunteerSWDAHG@gmail.com

A word of thanks to our friends at the Southwest Detroit Business Association whose support helped make Esparza's initial article possible.

Robert L. Dewaelsche,
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News, Managing Editor

Henry Ford & Henry Leland (1922) / Diego Rivera's "Detroit Industry" Frescoes (1933) / Timken Detroit Axle (1919) / UAW GM Cadillac Clark St. Pickets (1937)

Overview:
The Auto Heritage Guide (www.https://www.motorcities.org/southwest-detroit-auto-heritage-guide) is a welcome addition to the MotorCities National Heritage Area (MCNHA) website. We find it an invaluable resource that highlights a century of auto and labor history by focusing on area factories, community sites as well as neighborhood cultural groups.

Established in 1998, the MotorCities National Heritage Area Partnership is a nonprofit corporation that is part of the National Heritage Area System of the National Park Service. Its mission is to preserve, interpret and promote the region's rich automotive and labor heritage in Southeastern Michigan. A longtime friend of Southwest Detroit, MotorCities was instrumental in the development of the Fort Street Interpretive Park that opened in 2020.

"The business profiles, essays, videos, and links to other resources featured in the Auto Heritage Guide represent a wealth of detail that has often been overlooked in accounts that focus on the city at large rather than on a single neighborhood." Shawn Pomaville-Size, Executive Director of MotorCities, says of the *Guide's* launch. "Rarely has there been an opportunity to see such thoughtful analysis and so many rich documents assembled to help current and former residents, visitors, auto enthusiasts, faculty, students, and union members pay tribute to the automotive history of Southwest Detroit."

Brandi Watts, Vice President for Programs & Compliance at the Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA), adds that "We were eager to support Esparza's work that led to this profile because of Mr. Aguirre's pioneering efforts as a Latino auto entrepreneur. We are also most grateful to our friends at *EL CENTRAL* Hispanic News for their help in making this feature's publication possible. Our organization's involvement in the development of the *Guide* can be traced to the efforts of former SDBA President Kathy Wendler, who championed the idea that the neighborhood's auto history needed to be more fully appreciated. She forged the partnership between MCNHA and the volunteers, area scholars, and students that helps us celebrate our claim that Southwest Detroit should be recognized as one of the premier neighborhoods 'that built the car'."

Ron Alpern, the project's coordinator, underscores that, "The *Guide* is very much a work in progress, having been developed in three distinct phases over more than a decade. The profiles of prominent auto firms were developed first, followed by labor history highlights with an initial series of Community History essays that provide background and context. The *Guide* project's final phase seeks to cast a spotlight on those who came from afar to work in auto factories and formed the communities that contributed so much to the rich mosaic of the Southwest Detroit neighborhood." He continues that "We trust that *EL CENTRAL* readers will view this article as an open invitation to help generate additional material that showcases other auto-related businesses and cultural communities whose histories we'd like to incorporate into the *Guide*."

Explorando nuestro legado automotriz –

Presentamos la Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide

Nota del editor:
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News se complace en presentar la Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide a nuestros lectores y seguidores en línea. El artículo de Santiago Esparza, "Mexican Industries de Hank Aguirre", rinde homenaje a alguien que dejó su huella en la industria local y en nuestra comunidad de múltiples maneras. Resulta lógico que este artículo, junto con el de 2024 de *EL CENTRAL* sobre los Lowriders del área de Detroit, escrito por Andrea Meza, sean dos de los tres ensayos publicados en The Guide que presentan las raíces automotrices de nuestra comunidad.

Con el apoyo financiero de Press Forward, el movimiento nacional que fortalece a las comunidades revitalizando las noticias locales, *EL CENTRAL* prevé publicar cuatro artículos adicionales durante el próximo año que explorarán cómo la comunidad hispana del suroeste de Detroit ha contribuido al crecimiento y al impacto global de la industria automotriz. Los planes actuales contemplan una serie de dos partes que rastrea la primera ola de migración mexicana a Detroit después de la Primera Guerra Mundial, así como las dificultades de los repatriados, quienes se vieron obligados a regresar a México durante la Gran Depresión de la década de 1930. El Centro de Manufactura Hispana - Hispanic Manufacturing Center será el tema de otro artículo. Si bien este esfuerzo pionero de los emprendedores del barrio no perduró en ese momento, contribuyó al éxito de The Ideal Group, que será el tema central del cuarto artículo. Estos artículos se desarrollarán en colaboración con miembros del equipo de The Guide del Patrimonio Automotriz del Suroeste de Detroit. Si desea colaborar voluntariamente en la investigación de cualquier artículo, puede escribir a: volunteerSWDAHG@gmail.com.

Agradecemos a nuestros amigos de la Southwest Detroit Business Association, cuyo apoyo hizo posible el artículo inicial de Esparza.

Robert L. Dewaelsche,
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News, Managing Editor

Resumen:
La Auto Heritage Guide (www.https://www.motorcities.org/southwest-detroit-auto-heritage-guide) es una excelente incorporación al sitio web del Área de Patrimonio Nacional de MotorCities (MotorCities National Heritage Area Partnership MCNHA). Consideramos que es un recurso invaluable que destaca un siglo de historia automotriz y laboral, centrándose en fábricas de la zona, sitios comunitarios y grupos culturales del vecindario.

Fundada en 1998, la MotorCities National Heritage Area Partnership es una ONG que forma parte del Sistema de Áreas de Patrimonio Nacional del Servicio de Parques Nacionales. Su misión es preservar, interpretar y promover el rico patrimonio automotriz y laboral de la región del sureste de Michigan. MotorCities, un amigo de toda la vida del suroeste de Detroit, fue fundamental en el desarrollo del Parque Interpretativo de Fort Street, inaugurado en 2020.

"Los perfiles de empresas, ensayos, videos y enlaces a otros recursos que aparecen en el *Guide* del Patrimonio Automotriz representan una riqueza de detalles que a menudo se ha pasado por alto en los artículos que se centran en la ciudad en general, en lugar de en un solo barrio", comenta Shawn Pomaville-Size, director ejecutivo de MotorCities, sobre el lanzamiento de el *Guide*. "Pocas veces se ha tenido la oportunidad de ver un análisis tan profundo y una documentación tan completa para ayudar a residentes, visitantes, entusiastas de los automóviles, profesores, estudiantes y sindicalistas, actuales y anteriores, a rendir homenaje a la historia automotriz del suroeste de Detroit".

Brandi Watts, vicepresidenta de Programas y Cumplimiento Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA), añade: "Apoyamos con entusiasmo el trabajo de Esparza, que dio origen a este perfil, gracias a la iniciativa pionera del Sr. Aguirre como empresario latino del sector automotriz.

También agradecemos profundamente a nuestros amigos de *EL CENTRAL* Hispanic News por su ayuda para hacer posible la publicación de este artículo. La participación de nuestra organización en el desarrollo de el *Guide* se debe a los esfuerzos de la expresidenta de la SDBA, Kathy Wendler, quien defendió la idea de que la historia automotriz del vecindario debía apreciarse más plenamente. Ella forjó la colaboración entre del Área de Patrimonio Nacional de MotorCities y los voluntarios, académicos y estudiantes de la zona, lo que nos ayuda a celebrar nuestra reivindicación de que el Suroeste de Detroit debe ser reconocido como uno de los vecindarios más importantes que "construyeron el automóvil".

Ron Alpern, coordinador del proyecto, subraya: "el G*uide* es, en gran medida, un trabajo en progreso, desarrollado en tres fases distintas a lo largo de más de una década. Primero se desarrollaron los perfiles de importantes empresas automotrices, seguidos de los aspectos más destacados de la historia laboral con una serie inicial de ensayos sobre la historia de la comunidad que brindan antecedentes y contexto. La fase final del proyecto de el G*uide* busca destacar a quienes vinieron de lejos para trabajar en fábricas automotrices y formaron las comunidades que tanto contribuyeron al rico mosaico del vecindario del suroeste de Detroit". Continúa: "Confiamos en que los lectores de *EL CENTRAL* vean este artículo como una invitación abierta a ayudar a generar material adicional que muestre otras empresas y comunidades culturales relacionadas con el sector automotriz cuyas historias nos gustaría incorporar a el G*uide*".

NOTA: El *Guide* está actualmente solo en inglés, pero se planea añadir contenido en español próximamente. Visite la Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide en: www.motorcities.org/southwest-detroit-auto-heritage-guide

Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide

A Century of Auto History in a Neighborhood that Built the Car

Hank Aguiree's Mexican Industries

by Santiago Esparza III

Henry John "Hank" Aguirre was an imposing figure on the Tiger Stadium mound. The tall, lanky southpaw would stare in at the batter facing him and get him out with a broad array of dazzling pitches.

He was in the Detroit Tigers' bullpen as a relief pitcher in 1962 when he was pressed into the starter's role due to an injured teammate. He took advantage of the opportunity and notched the league's lowest ERA. Aguirre was unflappable on the mound, as he mowed down hitters and earned a spot on the MLB All-Star Game that season.

One favorite story: When he was a rookie, Hank struck out Boston Red Sox legend Ted Williams, and then asked Williams to autograph the ball. Williams, who was not known to do things like that, agreed. But the next time he faced Aguirre, Williams blasted the first pitch for a home run and told Aguirre to get the ball and he would autograph it as well.

Aguirre spent 16 seasons in the majors, pitching for four teams. He played for the Tigers from 1958 to 1967. He was considered a good teammate and a very determined player. Aguirre later served as a coach with the Chicago Cubs, serving as an effective buffer between players, the media, and mercurial manager Leo Durocher.

Launching a Minority Business

Aguirre took the same no-nonsense approach to business after he retired from baseball. He started Mexican Industries in Southwest Detroit in 1979 at the urging of Volkswagen of America executive Jack Masterson and attorney John Noonan, who saw the opportunity afforded by minority-preference automotive part sourcing and Hank's obvious leadership skills. Aguirre took out a mortgage on his home and, with an investment from his former teammate Bill Freehan, opened shop. The company's name referred to both the Mexicantown neighborhood that was adjacent to the ballpark and the company's heavily Latino workforce.

The company manufactured automotive textile products, including steering wheel covers, seat covers, air bags, and covers for spare tires, with most workers doing cutting and/or sewing.

Although the firm had humble beginnings, the company grew into a juggernaut, boasting 900 Detroit workers, and stood as an example of how to employ local people living within walking distance of the company and still compete with the big boys for contracts. Revenue climbed past $150 million by the late 1980s, fueled by contracts with GM, Chrysler, Ford, and a number of their Tier One suppliers.

Honoring Hank

In 1987, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce named Aguirre Businessman of the Year. The Chamber's honor wasn't just for Mexican Industries' performance, but also for Hank's work ethic and his commitment to the local community. He had worked for his father's tortilla company as a teen, making deliveries on foot starting at 4:00 AM before school. After starting Mexican Industries, he sponsored baseball, basketball, and soccer leagues for employees from the company's five buildings. When an employee was short on bill-paying money or needed a little extra cash for Christmas presents or rent, he gave advances with easy low-interest repayment plans; such payments were kept quiet to make sure employees were not embarrassed by having had to ask for the help.

At Mexican Industries, Aguirre was not content to run things from the corner office. He regularly walked the shop floors of his operations. He knew the first names of the people he stopped to chat with, remembered their children's birthdays, and gave them Christmas ornaments made by another of his businesses.

Not surprisingly, many of his workers liked and looked up to Aguirre. Some saw him almost as a father figure, so Aguirre enjoyed a good reputation on the Southwest side and the broader Detroit community. Many of the company's hires were residents new to the US and grateful for employment. The Michigan Minority Business Hall of Fame tribute video

Mexican Industries Automotive Component Manufacturing Operations - 1400 Howard St. (Circa 1980s)

Hank Aguirre started Mexican Industries in Southwest Detroit in 1979

bit.ly/HankAguirreVideo demonstrates the extremely high regard in which Aguirre was held in the neighborhood, region, and industry.

Like many entrepreneurs, Aguirre was convinced that he knew what was best for the company and its employees. So, in the early 1990s, when the UAW first tried to organize Mexican Industries' workers, Hank made his opposition known in no uncertain terms. That no doubt played a role in the 1993-95 UAW campaign that ended in defeat for the union.

Stormy Weather

When Hank's four children assumed the leadership roles after he died of cancer in 1994, the company had diversified to include new customers such as Lear, a Tier One auto supplier that manufactured seats, headliners, and in some cases full automotive interiors for Detroit's Big Three. In 1998 they formed Aguirre Safety Technologies, a joint venture with TRW to do the cut-and-sew work for side impact airbags.

But, even as the company's revenues climbed toward $190 million, storm clouds began to appear on the horizon. Timely payments were rare in the early 1990s, even for many of the best-performing suppliers. The company lost some key contracts while other firms didn't fulfill the original terms of contracts because of recurring quality deficiencies. Profit margins, always thin, shrank further and the company had to assume more debt. In the late 1990s, three different CEOs were at the helm of Mexican Industries.

Other pressures, most of them inherent to the nature of auto supplier operations, also were factors. First, the "cut-and-sew" work at Mexican Industries was very labor-intensive and in direct competition with low-wage producers in Mexico, pushing down what its customers would pay. Even after awarding contracts, automakers usually demanded yearly price cuts as a requirement for keeping the business. Second, while automakers had committed to sourcing more of their components from minority- and woman-owned enterprises, performing well was a challenge for firms whose profit margins were so thin. Joint ventures often helped them to upgrade operations to achieve more predictable quality, but profits were seldom sufficient to allow them to automate their processes enough to boost productivity.

As a consequence, most jobs at Mexican Industries – and at many other labor-intensive minority suppliers – would remain demanding, repetitive, and low-paying.

The Union

Five years after Hank Aguirre's death, the company seemed to have little option but to push workers harder in the face of the challenges associated with shipping each day's production and mounting financial pressure. The workforce, which was heavily female, seemed to have had enough. Seeking improvements in wages and working conditions, there was renewed interest in a new UAW campaign, despite the firm's threats to shut down the company if it was unionized.

The effort was led by then 26–year-old Cindy Estrada. Her father owned a bar in the neighborhood and the United Farm workers office was next door. She had been active in the United Farm Worker's Grape boycott. Her uncle was a Latin American Council for Labor Advancement (LACLA) activist. Estrada established a strong rapport with the company's workforce and was not afraid to challenge the firm's reputation as a benevolent employer with a reputation for caring about its employees and the community. The campaign augmented its ranks during the campaign's final phase by engaging Spanish language speaking officials from other UAW locals. Organizers met with workers in their homes and reached out whenever the opportunity presented itself. Estrada's success propelled her up the ranks in the UAW's Organizing Department, and she later became the UAW's first Latina vice-president, retiring in 2023.

The UAW carried all four of Mexican Industries' production facilities and captured 58% of the vote. The UAW brought in Ford and Visteon to try to broaden the company's customer base and worked behind the scenes to help keep the business solvent.

The Firm's Final Chapter

When Mexican Industries failed, some diehard anti-union people sought to blame the UAW. But even local bankers queried about the company's closure found the idea that a mere 25-cent raise had doomed Mexican Industries not particularly credible. That raise cost the company $676,000 a year in 2000, the only full year it was in effect; that was a pittance compared to the $22.6 million that Mexican Industries owed its unsecured creditors at the time.

The true scope of the company's troubles was kept from public view. Both management and the union believed that in order to save the firm and its jobs, new contracts had to be landed, short-term financing had to be secured, or a new owner found. They feared these efforts would be jeopardized if bankers and workers had a clearer view of the company's dire circumstances.

However, when it became known that the healthcare payments were being deducted from workers' paychecks, despite the benefit having

Continues on page 11

"Cut & Sew" Operations - Shop Floor Views Left -Date Unknown / Right – 1998 (Aguirre Safety Technologies)

Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide

Un siglo de historia del automóvil en un vecindario que construyó el automóvil

Mexican Industries de Hank Aguirre

Por Santiago Esparza III

Henry John "Hank" Aguirre fue una figura imponente en el montículo del Estadio de los Tigers. Zurdo, alto y desgarbado, miraba fijamente al bateador que tenía enfrente y lo ponchaba con unos lanzamientos deslumbrantes.

Formó parte del bullpen de los Detroit Tigers como relevista en 1962, cuando se vio obligado a asumir el rol de abridor debido a la lesión de un compañero. Aprovechó la oportunidad y registró la efectividad más baja de la liga. Aguirre se mantuvo imperturbable en el montículo, aniquilando bateadores y ganándose un lugar en el Juego de Estrellas de la MLB esa temporada.

La anécdota favorita: Cuando era novato, Hank ponchó a la leyenda de los Medias Rojas - Boston Red Sox, Ted Williams, y luego le pidió a Williams que autografiara la pelota. Williams, quien no era conocido por hacer ese tipo de cosas, accedió. Pero la siguiente vez que se enfrentó a Aguirre, Williams conectó un jonrón con el primer lanzamiento y le dijo a Aguirre que tomara la pelota y que él también la autografiaría.

Aguirre pasó 16 temporadas en las Grandes Ligas, lanzando para cuatro equipos. Jugó para los Tigres de 1958 a 1967. Era considerado un buen compañero de equipo y un jugador muy decidido. Posteriormente, Aguirre se desempeñó como entrenador de los Cachorros de Chicago - Chicago Cubs, sirviendo como un eficaz intermediario entre los jugadores, los medios de comunicación y el voluble mánager Leo Durocher.

Lanzó un negocio minoritario

Aguirre adoptó el mismo enfoque sensato en los negocios después de retirarse del béisbol. Fundó Mexican Industries en el suroeste de Detroit en 1979 a instancias del ejecutivo de Volkswagen of America, Jack Masterson, y del abogado John Noonan, quienes vieron la oportunidad que ofrecía el abastecimiento de piezas automotrices para minorías y las evidentes habilidades de liderazgo de Hank. Aguirre hipotecó su casa y, con una inversión de su excompañero de equipo Bill Freehan, abrió un taller. El nombre de la empresa hacía referencia tanto al barrio Mexicantown, adyacente al estadio, como a su fuerza laboral, mayoritariamente latina.

La empresa fabricaba productos textiles para automóviles, como fundas para volantes, fundas para asientos, bolsas de aire y fundas para llantas de refacción, y la mayoría de sus trabajadores se dedicaban al corte y/o la costura.

Aunque la empresa tuvo un comienzo humilde, se convirtió en un gigante, con 900 trabajadores en Detroit, y fue un ejemplo de cómo emplear a personas locales que vivían a poca distancia de la empresa y, al mismo tiempo, competir con las grandes empresas por contratos. Los ingresos superaron los 150 millones de dólares a finales de la década de 1980, impulsados por contratos con GM, Chrysler, Ford y varios de sus proveedores de primer nivel.

Homenaje a Hank

En 1987, la Cámara de Comercio Hispana de Estados Unidos nombró a Aguirre Empresario del Año. El reconocimiento de la Cámara no solo se debía al desempeño de Mexican Industries, sino también a la ética de trabajo de Hank y su compromiso con la comunidad local. De adolescente, trabajó en la empresa de tortillas de su padre, haciendo repartos a pie desde las 4:00 a. m. antes de ir a la escuela. Tras fundar Mexican Industries, patrocinó ligas de béisbol, baloncesto y fútbol para los empleados de los cinco edificios de la empresa. Cuando un empleado andaba corto de dinero para pagar facturas o necesitaba un extra para los regalos de Navidad o el alquiler, les daba anticipos con planes de pago fáciles y con bajos intereses; estos pagos se mantenían en secreto para que los empleados no se sintieran avergonzados por haber tenido que pedir ayuda.

En Mexican Industries, Aguirre no se conformaba con dirigir desde la oficina. Recorría regularmente las plantas de producción. Sabía los nombres de pila de las personas con las que se detenía a charlar, recordaba los cumpleaños de sus hijos y les regalaba adornos navideños hechos por otro de sus negocios.

No era de extrañar que muchos de sus trabajadores lo apreciaran y admiraran. Algunos lo veían casi como una figura paterna, por lo que Aguirre gozaba de buena reputación en el suroeste y en la comunidad de Detroit en general. Muchos de los empleados de la empresa eran residentes recién llegados a Estados Unidos y agradecidos por el empleo. El video de homenaje al Salón de la Fama de las Empresas Minoritarias de Michigan (bit.ly/HankAguirreVideo) demuestra la gran estima que se tenía a Aguirre en el vecindario, la región y la industria.

Manifestación Mexican Industries contra el UAW (Fecha desconocida) - El columnista y activista cultural de El Central, Osvaldo Rivera, tiene vívidos recuerdos de eventos similares. Le impactó el nivel de hostilidad mostrado y cómo dividió a la gente.

Como muchos empresarios, Aguirre estaba convencido de saber qué era lo mejor para la empresa y sus empleados. Así, a principios de la década de 1990, cuando el UAW intentó por primera vez organizar a los trabajadores de Mexican Industries, Hank expresó su oposición sin ambages. Esto sin duda influyó en la campaña del UAW de 1993-95 que terminó en derrota para el sindicato.

Tiempo Tormentoso

Cuando los cuatro hijos de Hank asumieron la dirección tras su fallecimiento de cáncer en 1994, la empresa se había diversificado para incluir nuevos clientes como Lear, un proveedor de automóviles de primer nivel que fabricaba asientos, tapizados de techo y, en algunos casos, interiores completos para las Tres Grandes de Detroit. En 1998, formaron Aguirre Safety Technologies, una empresa conjunta con TRW para realizar el trabajo de corte y confección de bolsas de aire de impacto lateral.

Pero, incluso cuando los ingresos de la compañía ascendían a 190 millones de dólares, comenzaron a aparecer nubarrones en el horizonte. Los pagos puntuales eran poco frecuentes a principios de la década de 1990, incluso para Muchos de los proveedores con mejor desempeño. La empresa perdió algunos contratos clave, mientras que otras firmas incumplieron los términos originales debido a deficiencias de calidad recurrentes. Los márgenes de ganancia, siempre bajos, se redujeron aún más y la empresa tuvo que asumir más deuda. A finales de la década de 1990, tres directores ejecutivos diferentes dirigían Mexican Industries.

Otras presiones inherentes a la naturaleza de las operaciones de los proveedores automotrices, también fueron factores. En primer lugar, el trabajo de "corte y confección" en Mexican Industries requería mucha mano de obra y competía directamente con productores de bajos salarios en México, lo que presionaba a la baja los precios que sus clientes estaban dispuestos a pagar. Incluso después de adjudicar los contratos, los fabricantes de automóviles solían exigir reducciones de precios anuales como requisito para mantener el negocio. En segundo lugar, si bien los fabricantes de automóviles se habían comprometido a obtener más componentes de empresas propiedad de minorías y mujeres, obtener un buen desempeño era un desafío para las empresas cuyos márgenes de ganancia eran tan bajos. Las empresas conjuntas a menudo les ayudaban a optimizar sus operaciones para lograr una calidad más predecible, pero las ganancias rara vez les permitían automatizar sus procesos lo suficiente como para aumentar la productividad.

Como consecuencia, la mayoría de los empleos en Mexican Industries, y de muchos otros proveedores minoritarios con alta demanda de mano de obra, seguían siendo exigentes, repetitivos y mal pagados.

El sindicato

Cinco años después de la muerte de Hank Aguirre, la empresa parecía no tener otra opción que exigir más a los trabajadores ante los desafíos asociados con el envío de la producción diaria y la creciente presión financiera. La fuerza laboral, predominantemente femenina, parecía haber tenido suficiente. En busca de mejoras salariales y laborales, se renovó el interés

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Hank Aguiree's Mexican Industries

Continued from page 10

already been terminated, the UAW sued. The union also alleged that the company had withheld vacation pay and that, when it closed, had failed to give its workers the legally required 60-day notice. Mexican Industries shuttered its doors for good in 2001, bringing to an end one of the nation's first major minority-owned auto suppliers.

A Neighborhood Legacy

The story is a sad one, especially for the workers who made their living at the company. But the full legacy of Mexican Industries is not only one of failure. Aguirre was a friend and mentor to numerous people in the industry. One of them was Frank Venegas, owner of Ideal Steel who had founded his company in Hamburg, Michigan, 50 miles northwest of Detroit. Aguirre felt that Ideal should have been located in Detroit and was not shy about letting Frank know that.

At Aguirre's funeral, Venegas and others decided to honor their friend's memory and made plans to develop the Hispanic Manufacturing Center (HMC) in the newly created Clark Street Technology Park. The HMCV partnership of the Ideal Group, Gonzalez Design Engineering, Munoz Machine Products and Uni Boring was established in one of the earliest Detroit Renaissance Zones in 1995. They were attracted to the former site of Cadillac Clark assembly plant, just south of Michigan Avenue, because of the tax credits offered through a partnership involving Detroit, Wayne County, the State of Michigan, and the federal government.

The life of the HMC was short-lived. However, the Ideal Group, having initially moved into one of Aguirre's buildings before centering its operations at the Technology Park, diversified its products and expanded. It has emerged as one of the most successful Latino-owned businesses in Michigan and a champion for the neighborhood.

This article has benefitted from economist Dan Luria's insights into the challenges facing auto suppliers during this period.

Support provided by the
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Southwest Detroit Auto Heritage Guide

Un siglo de historia del automóvil en un vecindario que construyó el automóvil

Mexican Industries de Hank Aguirre

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en una nueva campaña del UAW, a pesar de las amenazas de la empresa de cerrarla si se sindicalizaba.

La iniciativa fue liderada por Cindy Estrada, que entonces tenía 26 años. Su padre era dueño de un bar en el barrio y la oficina de United Farm Workers estaba al lado. Había participado activamente en el boicot a la producción de uvas de United Farm Worker´s Grape. Su tío era activista del Consejo Latinoamericano para el Avance Laboral (Latin American Council for Labor Advancement LACLA). Estrada estableció una sólida relación con los trabajadores de la empresa y no dudó en desafiar la reputación de la empresa como empleador benévolo y comprometido con sus empleados y la comunidad. La campaña aumentó sus filas durante la fase final, involucrando a funcionarios hispanohablantes de otras secciones locales del UAW. Los organizadores se reunieron con los trabajadores en sus hogares y los contactaron siempre que se presentó la oportunidad. El éxito de Estrada la impulsó a ascender en el Departamento de Organización del UAW, y posteriormente se convirtió en la primera vicepresidenta latina de la organización, jubilándose en 2023.

Cindy Estrada Foto de Jim West

El UAW controlaba las cuatro plantas de producción de Mexican Industries y obtuvo el 58% de los votos. El UAW contrató a Ford y Visteon para intentar ampliar la base de clientes de la empresa y trabajó entre bastidores para ayudar a mantener la solvencia del negocio.

El capítulo final de la empresa

Cuando Mexican Industries quebró, algunos antisindicales acérrimos intentaron culpar al UAW. Pero incluso los banqueros locales, consultados sobre el cierre de la empresa, consideraron poco creíble la idea de que un simple aumento de 25 centavos la hubiera condenado al fracaso. Ese aumento le costó a la empresa 676.000 dólares anuales en 2000, el único año completo de vigencia; una miseria en comparación con los 22,6 millones de dólares que Mexican Industries debía a sus acreedores quirografarios en ese momento.

El verdadero alcance de los problemas de la empresa se ocultó al público. Tanto la dirección como el sindicato creían que, para salvar la empresa y sus empleos, era necesario conseguir nuevos contratos, financiación a corto plazo o encontrar un nuevo propietario. Temían que estos esfuerzos se vieran comprometidos si los banqueros y los trabajadores tenían una visión más clara de la grave situación de la empresa. Sin embargo, cuando se supo que los pagos de seguro médico se estaban deduciendo de los salarios de los trabajadores, a pesar de que el beneficio ya había sido cancelado, el UAW presentó una demanda. El sindicato también alegó que la empresa había retenwido el pago de vacaciones y que, al cerrar, no había notificado a sus trabajadores con el preaviso legal de 60 días. Mexican Industries cerró definitivamente en 2001, poniendo fin a uno de los primeros grandes proveedores de automóviles propiedad de minorías del país.

Un legado vecinal

La historia es triste, especialmente para los trabajadores que se ganaban la vida en la empresa. Pero el legado completo de Mexican Industries no es solo un fracaso. Aguirre fue amigo y mentor de numerosas personas en la industria. Uno de ellos fue Frank Venegas, propietario de Ideal Steel, quien fundó su empresa en Hamburg, Michigan, a 80 kilómetros al noroeste de Detroit. Aguirre creía que Ideal debería haber estado ubicada en Detroit y no dudó en hacérselo saber a Frank.

En el funeral de Aguirre, Venegas y otros decidieron honrar la memoria de su amigo e hicieron planes para desarrollar el Centro de Manufactura Hispana (Hispanic Manufacturing Center HMC) en el recién creado Parque Tecnológico - Clark Street Technology Park. La alianza entre el HMCV e Ideal Group, Gonzalez Design Engineering, Munoz Machine Products y Uni Boring se establecieron en una de las primeras Zonas Renacentistas de Detroit en 1995. Se sintieron atraídos por la antigua sede de la planta de ensamblaje de Cadillac Clark, justo al sur de la Avenida Michigan, debido a los créditos fiscales ofrecidos a través de una asociación entre Detroit, el Condado de Wayne, el Estado de Michigan y el gobierno federal.

La existencia de HMC fue breve. Sin embargo, Ideal Group, tras haberse mudado inicialmente a uno de los edificios de Aguirre antes de centrar sus operaciones en el Parque Tecnológico, diversificó sus productos y se expandió. Se ha consolidado como una de las empresas de propiedad latina más exitosas de Michigan y un referente para el vecindario.

HMC - Celebrando la venta de la antigua planta de GM Cadillac en la calle Clark al recién creado Hispanic Manufacturing Center (agosto de 1996). Primera fila: de izquierda a derecha: Frank Venegas Jr., de Ideal Steel and Builders' Supplies, Inc.; Ric Gonzalez, de Gonzalez Design Engineering; y Facundo Bravo, de Uni Boring Co. Fila de atrás: Harold Kutner, de Compras Mundiales de GM; Carmen Muñoz, de Munoz Machine Products, Inc.; y William C. Brooks, de Relaciones Corporativas de GM. La celebración tuvo lugar en el restaurante El Zócalo (ahora Taquería El Rey) en el Barrio Mexicano.

Este artículo se ha beneficiado de las perspectivas del economista Dan Luria sobre los desafíos que enfrentaron los proveedores de automóviles durante este período.

Auto Heritage Guide Features

Firms & Sites:
Recommendations found at the outset of this section offer a path through the *Guide* that traces, in chronological order, the first half of Detroit's auto century. American Car & Foundry, the nation's largest producer of railcars in the latter part of the 19th century, was located on the site of the former General Motors Cadillac Clark Street operations. In the months before the crash of 1929, the Employer Association of Detroit's 'Labor Barometer' payroll report noted that 4,200 workers labored at four auto suppliers, and that 11,500 worked at Lincoln Motors, Graham Paige, GM's Fisher Body Fleetwood and Ternstedt plants, while Ford Rouge plant employed close to 99,000 workers.

Other posts trace the Ford Motor Company's evolution from the world's first vertically integrated industrial operation in the 1930s through seven decades years later, when its Rouge Assembly plant was turned into an exemplar of ecofriendly, sustainable manufacturing. The Michigan Central Station profile reminds us that the Station in its heyday can be regarded as Detroit's Ellis Island for the thousands from throughout the country and the world who sought work here during the auto boom years. Ford's billion-dollar commitment to transform the Station, which had been abandoned for almost five decades, into the hub of its effort to develop autonomous vehicles is also described.

Those posts and the profile of the supply chain management firm The James Group International underscore the continuing commitment that manufacturers are making to the area. The *Guide's* launch may be regarded as an open invitation to other auto businesses to collaborate on additional histories that belong in this section.

Community History:
The *Guide's* essays in this section provide additional context. They chronicle the area's 19th century industrial roots, the early years of the auto boom, and the challenges facing the industry since the end of World War II. They also focus on neighborhood events that figured prominently in transforming Detroit from a bastion of anti-unionism into one of America's premier union towns in the 1930s and beyond. The latest additions begin to complete the final leg of the *Guide's* three-legged stool.

The *Guide's* initial posts to the discussion of Latino/a auto history include a recent article from the National Trust for Historic Preservations magazine that introduces many of the key themes that will be explored further in the future. In addition to the Hank Aguirre profile, an *EL CENTRAL* article by Andrea Meza highlights the "Blessing of The Lowriders," a twenty-seven-year tradition whose goal is the breaking of stereotypes.

In the last year, several posts began the process of highlighting the ties of African Americans and Native Americans to the area's auto industry. The *Guide* hopes to add material that chronicles the auto history of the neighborhood's Arab American, Irish, Italian, Maltese, and Polish / Eastern European communities as well. Recently, an initial version of a "Disinvestment and Revitalization" essay was posted that explores decades of economic dislocation that battered the neighborhood during the last half of the 20th century. An initiative involving a class of Wayne State University undergraduate students is assisting research efforts that can advance work on many of these topics. Citizen researchers from the Southwest Detroit community and the metro area interested in aiding this effort would be most welcome.

Labor Roots:
While many of the posts in this section are linked to other sections of the *Guide*, this is where people interested in the neighborhood's labor history can find discussions of the 1932 Ford Hunger March protest, the sit-down strikes and organizing campaigns that launched the United Automobile Workers' union, and the career of Walter Reuther in the decades prior to World War II.

We "Auto" Know More:
This section features a list of auto-related firms, labor unions, and cultural communities whose contributions to the history of Southwest Detroit have yet to be developed. **Help Build the Guide** introduces contributors to the Guide.

Visit the Auto Heritage Guide at:
www.motorcities.org/southwest-detroit-auto-heritage-guide
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Detroit City FC Stadium Financing Unveiled to Neighborhood Advisory Council

By Santiago Esparza

The Detroit City Football Club has applied for $88 million in tax breaks as it pushes forward with plans to build a stadium, parking garage and housing on the site of a closed hospital in Southwest Detroit.

The three tax abatements are split between offsetting the cost of the housing and parking garage portion of the $150 million development, razing the hospital and rehabilitation of the brownfield upon which the project will be built on Michigan Avenue and 20th Street. If approved, the tax breaks will be in effect for up to 30 years.

Detroit Economic Growth Corporation officials said the project will net the city more than $14 million in personal and property taxes and an additional $745.7 million in visitor spending during that time. The club will pay property taxes on the stadium. DEGC officials understand that the tax breaks are a big request but realize the blighted hospital needs to come down and the city doesn't have large amounts of space without environmental issues available for redevelopment.

"Auburn Hills has greenfields. Detroit has brownfields," said DEGC Vice President of Real Estate and Development Services David Howell. "We are competing in some cases with cities for developments and jobs that don't have the same issues."

Club officials said they are accepting no direct funding. Howell confirmed this and said none of the tax breaks, if approved, will be awarded until the project is completed. In addition, the club had to show that it could generate at least $1.20 in revenue for every dollar of debt it incurs for the project. The club was able to show $1.27, Howell said

"We are not just handing out cash," he said. "If this goes sideways ...(club cofounder) Sean Mann and his partners are on the hook. Sean is not doing this to move away. He is investing in the city."

The 15,000-seat stadium is expected to drive new development in the area and be a link between the city's Corktown and Mexicantown areas. The stadium site is in an area with at least 5,000 residents who will be affected by increased traffic, visitors and need for parking on game days or if concerts are held at the stadium.

Mann and at least another cofounder live within walking distance of the project and also will feel the impact and the wrath of neighbors not happy about the disruptions. But Mann said the club is trying its best to be transparent about the plans.

"People will see me walking my dog," he said. "We live in the community." The project is expected to generate 1,000 construction jobs. Mann said the club will follow city regulations that stipulate that the majority of workers be people of color and residents of Detroit. He will hire about 100 fulltime workers at the stadium and the majority will be city residents.

If nothing was done in the area of the stadium, it would generate about $2 million for the city over 30 years. The hospital had contaminated water in the basement that needed to be cleared and cleaned before demolition could begin. The site was not ideal and officials said the stadium founders using private funding to pay for the project is a boon.

The tax breaks are being sought under a city ordinance that requires community input, a Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) and other requirements in order to apply for the abatements. Three meetings have been held and more are scheduled through October on Thursday evenings at the Mexicantown Mercado. The NAC will have the ability to speak directly with club officials about issues such as adequate or noise concerns. Those concerns will have to be addressed in order to obtain the tax relief.

There are nine NAC members and one nonvoting alternate. Two NAC members were elected by residents in the affected area near the stadium project, three were appointed by the Detroit City Council and four by the city's planning department.

The next meeting is at 6 p.m. on Sept. 25 and will be a working meeting of the NAC. The NAC can be emailed at dcfcnac@gmail.com.

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Santiago Esparza is a Detroit-based freelance writer. He is a native of Southwest Detroit

This article was made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.

The nine newly-installed NAC voting members and one alternate listen to a presentation by City Planning Dept representative Aaron Goodman

DEGC Representative David Howell outlines the stadium financing package for the NAC

Film Detroit Brings Industry Resources Directly to Detroiters

By Michael D. Gutierrez

Maurizio Dominguez stood shoulder to shoulder beside fellow creatives at the Alfred Brush Ford Park Community Center last Wednesday afternoon looking to solve the everyday problems that keep local filmmakers like him scrambling for crew and permits. "I'm hoping to network. To meet people like DPs (Directors of Photography), colorists, crew members, and actors," he explained. "Any project requires a team, so the more people you connect with, the easier it is."

During Film Detroit's first community outreach and resource fair, held on September 10, filmmakers networked with fellow crew members, got straight answers about city permits, and learned how to submit work to Detroit's public access channels, including Channels 22 and 68. The drop-in format meant anyone could attend—no registration, no experience required, just Detroiters showing up hoping to turn expertise and excitement into real connections so that they could, ultimately, crew up and create films.

"In the past, working with the Film Office felt like sending an email and maybe hearing back weeks later, maybe not at all. It didn't feel open or accessible," Dominguez noted. Rather than wait for permits, many Detroit filmmakers just start shooting, the same way musicians here record in basements and visual artists transform abandoned buildings into galleries. It's part of Detroit's creative DNA: if the system doesn't work for you, build your own. But that approach also means missing out on resources and protections that proper permits provide. "If these events continue and resources are brought directly to filmmakers, that will go a long way," Dominguez said .

Film Detroit Program Coordinator Chantal Cook and her team set up the fair, the first of its kind for the organization, to remove the typical hurdles that make it hard for filmmakers to get city support. "This event was about welcoming everybody. We didn't do registration or sign-ups because we didn't want to put a cap on it," Cook said. She handles permit applications and builds relationships with Detroit schools, nonprofits, and independent studios.

During her presentation, Cook pulled back the curtain on applying for film permits and revealed a new public access channel launching this month: the long-running "Channel 22 is for high school and college students, nonprofits, and youth groups. It's more education-based…" And the newly launching "Channel 68 is for indie filmmakers and adults—documentaries, music videos, interviews, or even someone's first film."

Cook's welcoming approach to submissions had already paid off before the fair even started. "We're not looking for only Spike Lee-level movies. I'm not going to be a harsh critic," she explained, adding that 10 to 20 filmmakers had already sent in work before submissions officially opened Wednesday. "People are eager and want their content on our channels," she said.

Kiara Williams attended the fair to advance her own Detroit-focused business development while connecting with the film community. As founder of Treuse Cinema, a boutique movie theater she hopes to one day build in Downtown, Williams used the networking opportunity strategically "to collect consumer data." She explained, "I'm running a survey for Detroiters who love movies and live relatively close to Downtown."

Williams sees movies as a way to build connections between neighbors and showcase authentic Detroit stories, explaining, "Detroit is Black, Detroit is creative, Detroit is strong, and I resonate with that." When asked what Williams needs most to see her project through, the answer was clear: "capital." She's not alone in that struggle. It's the barrier that came up repeatedly during Wednesday's conversations.

"The number one challenge is funding," Dominguez said, acknowledging what the outreach event couldn't solve with permits and networking alone. "Raising enough money to put a project into production is tough. A lot of people start passion projects, but without money behind them, it's like swimming against the current." But in a city where immigrant communities like ours help shape the creative landscape, some filmmakers face legal barriers layered on top of financial ones.

Saattik Das navigated the fair knowing his visa status creates complications most filmmakers don't face. The Troy resident, who moved from Kolkata, India, when he was two, can't legally get paid for film work. "So I focus on helping people complete their vision, and have them help me complete mine, without the logistical side getting in the way," he explained.

While the visa complications don't seem to get any easier to handle in the near future, Das, a Wayne State marketing student, still manages to find value that extends beyond just growing his career. "Even if the rest of the world doesn't care who I am, this place does," said Das. According to Dominguez, that caring community Das references has been supporting Detroit filmmakers through informal networks for years.

Dominguez mentioned there are Facebook groups where people share tips about getting sponsorships or resources, and while that virtual community exists, "it's good to see the city recognizing it and getting involved."

Cook's team discovered just how much filmmakers wanted that official support when they started reaching out and designed the fair to strengthen connections that already exist within it. "We're trying to build connections," she said, gesturing toward attendees sharing equipment tips and swapping Instagram handles, "to become that hub where we can give and share resources in the community. We want to create space where people can network, collaborate, have panels and workshops."

The outreach event was just the beginning for Cook, who plans monthly community events throughout the city. Cook hopes the next gathering will flip the format. Instead of learning about permits and distribution, the team is exploring hosting a panel of experienced Detroit filmmakers to offer advice and feedback on locally created projects. For now, Cook said, "just our presence at events like this means something. This is our first one, but we'll be out every month, hitting the pavement, opening our doors, and sharing knowledge."

Anyone ready to submit work to Channels 22 and 68 can do so at http://tinyurl.com/4k2jk3wb. The channels launch later this month, with each piece running for about four weeks.

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CORRECTION:
In our last issue, the article about the All Latina Artists Gallery at Vamonos should have identified the artist of the above painting as Jessica Mojica and listed her as a participating artist. We regret the error.

De la oficina del Tesorero del Condado de Wayne,
Eric R. Sabree

PUEDE AYUDARLO CON EL PROCESO DE ASISTENCIA CON SUCESIONES

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Wolverines and Lions Dominate This Weekend

EL CENTRAL
HISPANIC NEWS
SPORTS

Sports Editor: Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL

Wolverines photos by Adam J. Dewey, and Lions photos provided by Detroit Lions

This past Saturday, the #21 University of Michigan Wolverines (2-1) defeated the Central Michigan Chippewas (1-2), 63 - 3.

Wolverines rookie QB #19 Bryce Underwood bounced back after his loss at Oklahoma. Underwood was 16 for 25, for 235 yards with 1 TD and 1 INT. Underwood also had 9 carries for 114 yards and scored 2 TDs.

The Wolverines go on the road to take on Nebraska Cornhuskers, this Saturday, September 20th, at 2:30 pm (CBS).

The Wolverines return to the Big House, on Saturday October 4th, to take onWisconsin Badgers at either noon or 3:30pm (TV TBD).

The Michigan State Spartans (3-0) defeated Youngstown State Penguins (2-1), 41 - 24.

The Spartans travel to take on #25 USC Trojans (for their first Big Ten Conference game), this Saturday, September 20th at 11:00 pm (FOX).

The Spartans then travel to take on Nebraska Cornhuskers on Saturday, October 4th, at either 12, 3:30 pm or 4:00 pm (TV TBD).

The Detroit Lions (1-1), bounced back after their loss and dominated the Chicago Bears (0-2), this past Sunday.

The Lions defeated the Bears, 52 - 21.

Lions QB #16 Jared Goff was 23 for 28, for 334 yards, with 5 TDs.

The Lions travel to take on the Baltimore Ravens, this Monday, September 22, for Monday Night Football, at 8:15 pm (ABC/ ESPN).

The Lions return to Ford Field to host the Cleveland Browns, on Sunday, September 28th, at 1:00 pm (FOX)

Photos below are highlights from the Wolverines vs. Chippewas and Lions vs. Bears games

Bryce Underwood (#19) breaks a tackle before rushing into the end zone for his second rushing TD on the day. Underwood was 16 for 25, for 235 yards with 1 TD and 1 INT, had 9 carries for 114 yards and scored 2 TDs

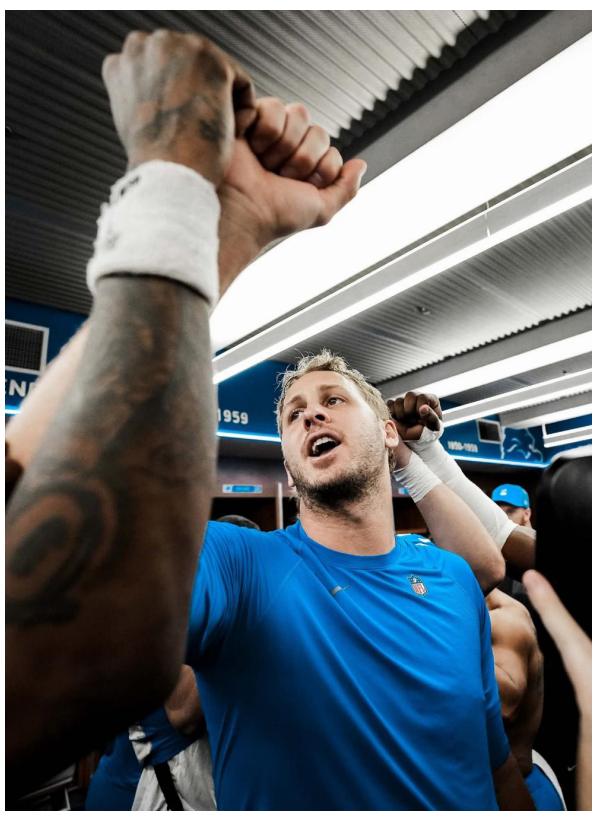
Justice Haynes (#22) throws a stiff arm to break a tackle for a big gain. Haynes had 14 carries for 104 yards with 1 TD, and 1 reception for 16 yards

Jaishawn Barham (#1) sacks CMU QB Joe Labas (#2)

Interim head coach Biff Poggi (in blue shirt) watches a replay on the the big screen in between plays

Lions DB #32 Brian Branch receives game ball after defeating the Bears in Lions locker room, for top defensesive player. Branch had 6 tackles and 1 sack during the game

Lions WR #14 Amon-Ra St. Brown receives game ball after defeating the Bears in Lions locker room, for top offensive player. St. Brown had 2 carries for 7 yards and 9 receptions for 115 yards and 3 TDs



Lions QB #16 Jared Goff leads the Lions in a cheer in the Lions locker room after the game

No More Breaks For DCFC

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS
Pateando la No. 5
SPORTS

David Levine
EL CENTRAL

Detroit City FC has now had its final weekend without a game before the end of the regular season. It's just as well they had a weekend off. After crushing Orange County 4-1 in their last appearance at Keyworth Stadium, they threw away their trip to New Mexico last Wednesday with an equally abysmal 4-0 loss.

That game almost got off to the perfect start. Straight from the kick-off, Jay Chapman sent Jordan Adebayo-Smith through on goal. Unfortunately, as the clock hit eleven seconds, the New Mexico goalkeeper spread himself big enough to make a crucial save. Less than five minutes later, Carlos Herrera, deputizing for Carlos Saldana, was beaten from beyond midfield. That set the tone for the remaining eighty-five minutes.

Danny Dichio opted to rest several players and left his first choice strikers at home. Darrin Smith, the leading goal-scorer, nursed a shoulder injury. Ates Diouf, his reliable partner, tended to family matters. That left Le Rouge with no offense. Saldana, Alex Villanueva, and Haruki Yamazaki all started on the bench. DCFC could not overcome the changes. By the time, Dichio brought in Villanueva and Yamazaki at halftime, the game was already gone. DCFC will rue the points given away so easily.

Detroit City starts off four home games in a row on Saturday night against Lexington SC. The expansion team has given a decent account of themselves this year. They are in the running for a playoff spot in the Western Conference. Weirdly, they have the exact same record as DCFC, eight wins, eight draws, and eight losses. They also find themselves in sixth spot, but unlike DCFC could finish as high as second with a decent run to end the season.

Lexington represents the weakest of the four teams lined up to visit Keyworth. Louisville, North Carolina, and Loudoun United will be coming after that. All three of them are above DCFC in the Eastern Conference. Louisville is out of reach, but the other two could be caught if a full strength DCFC gives full effort in the remaining home games.

USA RESTORES SOME PRIDE

Mauricio Pochettino's first year in charge of the US men's national team has been tough. Key players have been injured. Performances have varied from mediocre to terrible. A number of big stars missed the CONCACAF Gold Cup, the last competitive tournament before the World Cup. The team has failed to play as more than the sum of its parts. Less than a year from hosting the World Cup, this is not what supporters want to see.

The supporters have made it clear that they don't like what they see, too. For most of the games this year, the visiting team has had the upper hand in the stands. Nowhere was that more evident that during the September international window. Given the general apathy surrounding the team, it wasn't a surprise to see South Korean supporters fill Sports Illustrated Stadium (formerly known as Red Bull Arena) in Harrison, New Jersey. There was less surprise when those Korean supporters rose as one to salute a goal by national hero Son Heung-Min. The LAFC forward has achieved unsurpassed status in South Korea. His move to MLS lifted Los Angeles' thriving Korean community.

South Korea added a second goal before halftime and even though the USA improved during the second half, the result was never in doubt. Immediately afterward the daggers came out for Pochettino and the team. Listless, passionless, unskilled, and many more negative assessments cascaded through message boards and much of the media.

Something had to happen. Japan came to Columbus on the heels of a dire 0-0 draw with Mexico. They switched out their entire starting eleven for the game against the USA. Once again, Columbus gave the Americans just the tonic they needed. With a new three-man back line formation and two fast wingers, the USA finally gave a performance with some promise.

Goals from Folarin Balogun and Alejandro Zendejas provided the familiar 2-0 margin of victory for games in Columbus. Balogun appeared under Pochettino for the first time and gained the most in this camp. He clearly outplayed fellow striker Josh Sargent, who started against South Korea. His pace and ability to hold the ball give him a huge edge over Sargent. Only Ricardo Pepi can challenge Balogun for the striker position in the national team barring injuries. Pepi started for his club last weekend and scored twice to announce his intent to compete.

Zendejas has been on the fringes of the national team for some time. He provided what many MLS observers hoped Diego Luna would give to the team: a passionate, energetic wide player who can score at the top level. Luna did not offer much in his appearance this window and didn't deliver against Mexico in the CONCACAF Gold Cup final over the summer. Zendejas has been on a roll for Club America in Liga MX. He showed the aggressiveness Pochettino wants in his players.

Goalkeeper Matt Freese played all of both games. He wasn't at fault for the goals conceded against South Korea and made six saves against Japan. He looks like the starting goalkeeper at the moment, but competition from Matt Turner and Zach Steffen will keep him on his toes.

Other winners in September include Chris Richards. He has cemented his place as a starting center back in either a back three or back four. Young defender Alex Freeman had a solid camp, too. He played as both a full back in a back four and a wing back when the USA switched to three central defenders. The national team welcomed Sergino Dest back after a long injury absence. He showed his versatility by playing on both wings. Christian Pulisic looked like his usual self against Japan after an indifferent display against South Korea.

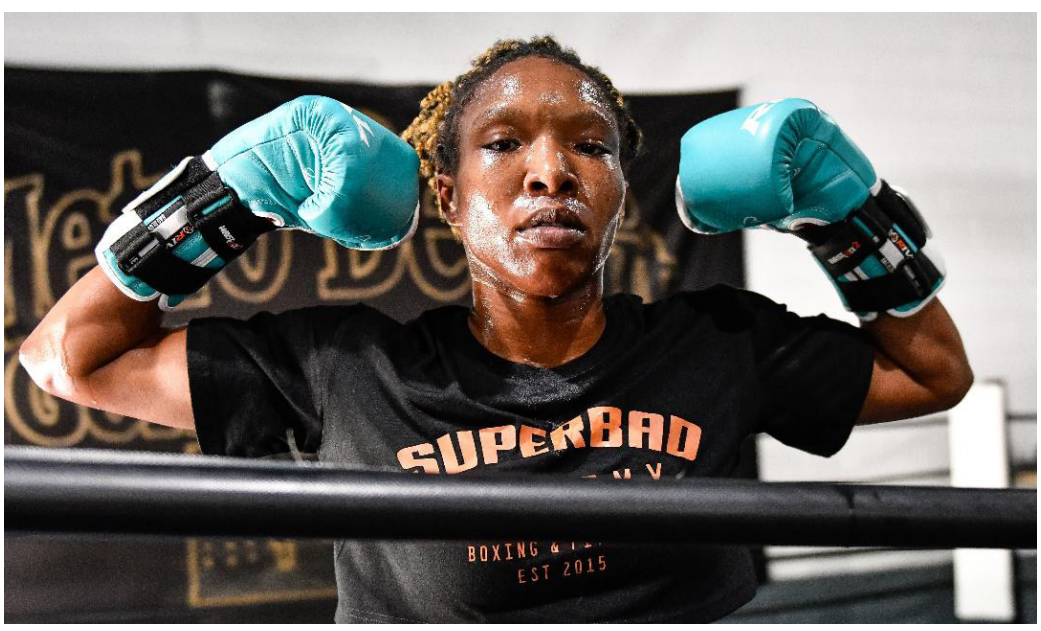
The players have now returned to their clubs for the remainder of the month. The team will gather in early October for games against Ecuador in Austin and Australia in Denver. Both teams have qualified for the World Cup, so this will be another solid pair of games. Pochettino has said that he is now done experimenting and will be picking a group much closer to the squad he intends to use next summer. That makes the October internationals interesting viewing to see what his plan is and how it has evolved over the course of the last year.

Boxing at the Fox Theatre

Jasmine Hampton photo by Adam J Dewey

Ahead of her professional debut on the Salita Promotions BIG TIME BOXING USA card—set for Friday, September 19 at the historic Fox Theatre and airing live on DAZN—Ann Arbor standout Jasmine Hampton (trains at Tony Harrison's Super Bad Gym in Detroit) will make a special visit to Super Bad Gym. Hampton will meet and help coach nationally ranked Olympic hopefuls, bringing her journey full circle from celebrated amateur to rising professional.

JASMINE HAMPTON (pictured below, will make her pro debut at Big Time Boxing USA at the Fox Theatre) – highly decorated amateur standout from Ann Arbor; one of the region's most popular amateurs, Hampton will make her pro debut at 122-pounds.



SPECIAL WORLD'S CULTURES

Independence of Mexico

Independence of Mexico

On the night of September 15th, and into the early morning of September 16th, Mexico was dressed up for the celebration of the festivities commemorating the beginning of the independence movement. At midnight, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum gave what we call the Grito de Independencia, recalling when Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla in Dolores, Guanajuato, on September 16, 1810, call the people for the creation of a new nation, the Mexican nation.

Before that day, for months, perhaps years, conversations had been brewing about the importance of separating the viceroyalty of the New Spain and creating a new homeland in the Mesoamerican territory where the Aztec-Mexican empire had been located upon the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century, 300 years earlier.

Once independence from Spain was signed in 1821, after 11 years of armed struggle, the First Mexican Empire was founded, ruled by Agustín Iturbide, with a territory that extended from much of what is now the United States of America to Costa Rica. However, this vast territory did not remain like this, for so, in less than 30 years, its territory lost Central America, Texas, and half of the today's half of United States of America, leaving what we now know as the Mexican national territory.

Mexico sought its national symbol, the Mexican flag, with three colors: green for hope, white for the union of peoples, and red for the blood shed by heroes to create the nation. In the center, where the white color is, is the national emblem, which represents the eagle devouring the serpent, an allegory of the Aztec-Mexican myth that Huitzilopochtli told them that by looking at this, they would find the land where they would built Tenochtitlan.

In 1824, the Constituent Congress was created with the aim of creating a Magna Carta to govern the new nation, resulting in the creation of the first Federal Republic of Mexico under President Guadalupe Victoria.

By 1857, political movements led to the Reform Wars, seeking to separate church and state. This movement was led by Benito Juárez, a Zapotec Oaxacan. From this moment on, the Mexican State took part in population registration, issuing birth, baptism, and marriage certificates, among other matters.

Once national politics were organized, problems of unification began to emerge. We cannot forget that Mexico was a country in the 19th century inhabited by more than 150 indigenous peoples. Although their traditions were similar, the differences between those in the north and those in the south were substantially marked, both in culture and diet, among other aspects.

The new nation faced a bigger problem: how to unify such a diverse country? And this is where art came into its own. With the desire to unify the vision of the Mexican and to overturn the caste-based social organization established by the colony, the idea of the mestizo was conceptualized, the inhabitant, a product of the colony, with roots in Indigenous American, European, and African peoples. The mestizo became the idea of what a Mexican is, that union and fusion that creates an identity.

From what happened more than 200 years ago, those struggles for independence, we are left with a mestizo culture, a unified blend in which the magical world and the globalized technological world coexist. Innovative fantasy and artisanal tradition. The traditional music of the indigenous peoples. The language that unites us with all of Hispanic America to create the splendor of the many Mexicos that are also one, but which must continue to seek the preservation and coexistence of this diversity of identities. In 2025, let us celebrate not only Mexico, but also the break with Europe, and seek centuries of a government emancipated from foreign intervention.

Sigue cada semana en
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News
ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO,
by Mariana Ayón RV

ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO

Independencia de México

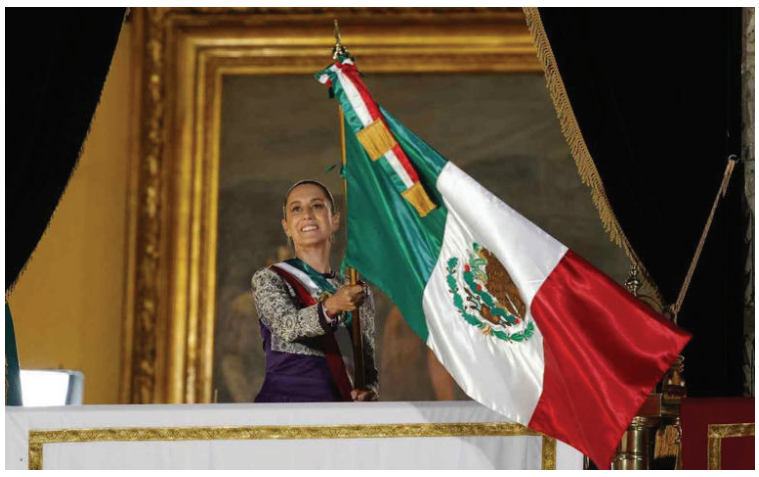
Independencia de México

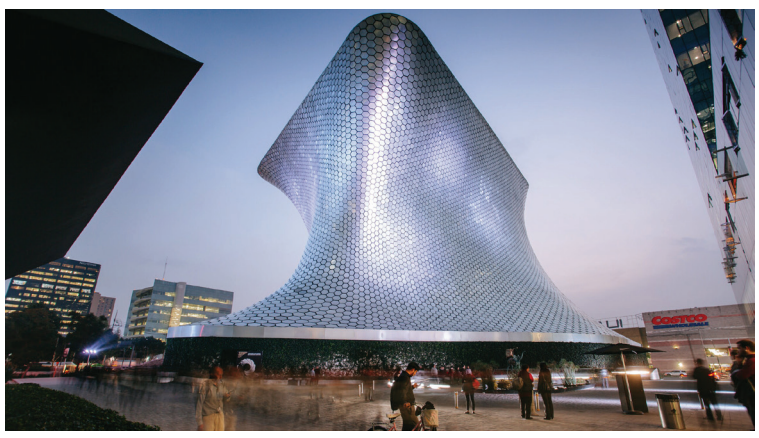
La noche del 15 de septiembre, para la madrugada del 16 de septiembre, México se vistió de gala con la celebración de las fiestas de que conmemoran el inicio del movimiento por la independencia. A la media noche la presidenta de México Claudia Sheinbaum dio lo que llamamos El Grito de Independencia, rememorando el grito que dio Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, en Dolores, Guanajuato el 16 de septiembre de 1810 para convocar a la creación de una nueva nación, la nación mexicana.

Durante meses, quizá años se gestaban conversaciones sobre la importancia de separar el virreinato de la Nueva España, para crear una nueva patria en el territorio Mesoamericano, donde a la llegada de los españoles en el siglo XVI, 300 años antes, se ubicó el imperio Azteca-Mexica.

Una vez firmada la independencia de España en 1821, después de 11 años de lucha armada, se funda el Primer Imperio Mexicano regido por Agustín Iturbide, con un territorio que se extendía desde gran parte de lo que actualmente es Estados Unidos de América, hasta Costa Rica. Sin embargo, este extenso territorio no permaneció inerte y en menos de 30 años había mermado su territorio de Centro América, Texas, California y Nuevo México; quedando en lo que actualmente conocemos como el territorio nacional mexicano.

México buscaba el símbolo nacional, la Bandera de México con los tres colores: verde de la esperanza, blanco de la unión de los pueblos y rojo de la sangre derramada por los héroes para crear la nación. Al





centro, donde está el color blanco se encuentra el escudo nacional que es el águila devorando la serpiente, en alegoría al mito mexica-azteca que Huitzilopochtli les indico que al mirar esto encontrarían la tierra donde habrían de fundar Tenochtitlan.

Para 1824 se crea el congreso constituyente con el afán de crear una Carta Magna que rigiera a la nueva nación, y resultando en la creación de la primera República Federal Mexicana bajo el presidente Guadalupe Victoria.

Para 1857 los movimientos políticos llevaron a las guerras de reforma con el afán de separar a la Iglesia del Estado, un movimiento liderado por un oaxaqueño de origen Zapoteca, Benito Juárez. A partir de este momento, el Estado Mexicano tomó parte en el registro de la población emitiendo certificados de natalidad, bautizos, matrimonios, entre otros.

Una vez organizada la política nacional, los problemas de unificación fueron emergiendo, pues, no podemos olvidar que México es un país en el siglo XIX era habitado por más de 150 pueblos indígenas que, aunque con semejanzas en sus tradiciones, entre los del norte y los del sur las diferencias eran sustancialmente marcadas tanto en cultura como en alimentación, entre otras.

La nueva nación se enfrentaba a un problema más grande, ¿Cómo unificar a un país tan diverso? Y aquí es donde el arte tuvo lugar, con el afán de unificar la visión del mexicano y que la organización social de castas que había establecido la colonia fuera anulada, se conceptualizó la idea del mestizo, el habitante producto de la colonia con raíces de los pueblos indígenas americanos, europeos y africanos. El mestizo se constituyó como la idea de lo que es el mexicano, esa unión y fusión que hace una identidad.

De aquello que pasó hace más de 200 años, esas luchas de independencia, nos quedan una cultura mestizada, mezcla unificada en la que coexiste el mundo mágico y el mundo tecnológico globalizado. La fantasía innovadora y la tradición artesana. La música tradicional de los pueblos indígenas. La lengua que nos unifica con todo hHispanoamérica para crear el esplendor de los muchos Méxicos que son también uno, pero que debe seguir buscando la preservación y coexistencia de esta diversidad de identidades.

Este 2025 celebremos no sólo a México, sino la ruptura con Europa y busquemos que vengan siglos de un gobierno emancipado de la intervención extranjera.

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EL CENTRAL
Hispanic News

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